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PREFACE

The period—November 5, 1926 to January 20, 1927—covered by this volume was a relatively quiet one. There was a lull in political activity and Gandhiji, enjoying freedom from incessant touring and public speaking, could devote his time to things that concerned him more—spinning and khadi, anti-untouchability and anti-drink work, Hindu-Muslim unity and cow-protection—besides attending to the immense volume of letters that poured in from all quarters.

But most of all it was a period of inward searching and pondering over spiritual values. One such question that exercised Gandhiji's mind at this time was that of stray dogs. The issue, as he put it, was "whether in consonance with the principle of ahimsa, it may be a duty to kill certain dogs under certain circumstances when no other alternative is possible. I submit that it may be and I hold that there cannot be two opinions in the matter" (p. 42).

Apparently there were two opinions. Those who held more formal notions of non-violence wrote indignant letters. In the series of articles under the title "Is This Humanity?", begun in the preceding volume and concluded in this, Gandhiji answered the critics and provided a lucid exposition of the principle of ahimsa as he understood it. "All action," says Gandhiji, "is tainted inasmuch as it presupposes *himsa*. And yet we free ourselves from the bondage of action through action itself . . . And this *himsa* . . . must be the lowest minimum, must be rooted in compassion, must have discrimination, restraint, detachment at its back, and must lead us every moment onward to the path of ahimsa. . . . The religion of ahimsa consists in allowing others the maximum of convenience at the maximum of inconvenience to us, even at the risk of life. Everyone has to determine for himself the amount of inconvenience he is capable of putting up with. . . . Religion, even as the soul, is both one and many" (pp. 380-1).

Pride of place in this volume goes naturally to the "Discourses on the *Gita*", the finest fruit of his sabbatical year in the Ashram. An apt introduction to this informal masterpiece is provided by the critical account of Shrimad Rajchandra with which the volume opens. It was this friend who in 1893-94 helped Gandhiji to resolve his doubts about his mother-religion, assured him that no other religion has its "subtle and profound thought, its

vision of the soul or its charity" and thus restored to him his peace of mind. What Gandhiji sorely needed at the time, and what Rajchandra's answers to his questions (Appendix I) and the books sent by him provided in ample measure, was a spiritual motive and experience, a hope and glimpse of *moksha* in this very life, which would make it worth one's while to practise the higher ethics of utmost responsibility for oneself and freedom for others. One of the books recommended and sent by Rajchandra, the *'umukshuprakarana* of the *Yoga Vasishtha*, prescribes a strong sense of *purushakara* (human endeavour) in facing world problems, and also self-examination and critical analysis at every step of experiences as they come. If, when the ideas of Maitland and Tolstoy came to Gandhiji, he was ready to accommodate and apply them within the framework of his ancestral Vaishnavism, it was because he had already been "converted" to *mumukshutva*, by the wise counsel of Rajchandra. This "serious call" to a life of *moksha*-oriented dharma is the only conversion which Gandhiji considered legitimate and which every true religion expects at some stage from its adherents.

Though for various reasons Gandhiji declined to accept Rajchandra as a guru in the traditional sense he was grateful to the Jain philosopher for the counsel to cling to one's own faith, to respect other faiths and in due course to transcend all faiths which were like "so many walled enclosures in which men and women were confined". While studying the excellence of each faith and explaining it to the followers of that faith, the genuine seeker finds that "after a certain stage is reached the Shastras give no help; experience alone helps then" (p. 12). Beyond this stage every Shastra becomes a fetter hindering further progress. Since every accepted faith has thus to be transcended in experience, "everyone may, following his own faith, win his freedom, that is, *moksha*, for to win *moksha* means to be perfectly free from attachments and aversions" (p. 13).

In the "Discourses on the *Gita*" there are repeated references to the Bible, the Koran, *Pilgrim's Progress* and the works of Rajchandra himself, all of which show Gandhiji's readiness and ability to handle the *Gita* not as a sectarian scripture but as a manual of universal religion and pure ethics "which persons belonging to all faiths can read" (p. 350).

Gandhiji's interpretation of the *Gita*, as indeed of the entire epic, is *adhyatmic* or anagogical. The war described by Vyasa is no external or historical event, but a vivid poetic representation of the invisible conflict raging within each one of us. "It tells of the

. . . Pandavas in our minds who are battling with the Kauravas in it. . . . Krishna is the *atman* in us, who is our charioteer. We can win only if we hand over the reins of the chariot to him" (pp. 108-9).

By this surrender of the reins to Krishna within, by thus internalizing and enthroning the ideal person pictured in Ch. II, the autonomy of the individual, his freedom of choice and responsibility for effort, is strengthened rather than weakened. "The *Gita* does not decide for us. But if, whenever faced with a moral problem, you give up attachment to the ego and then decide what you should do, you will come to no harm" (p. 109). To measure our progress in disinterestedness, "our yardstick is the ability to see others as ourselves" (p. 374). Progress here is far from easy, but one is helped to "see others in oneself by seeing them and oneself in God" (p. 249). In this process of identification, the first step is identification with Arjuna so that the Lord's words to him are felt to be meant for us.

Hence the central importance, even in our public prayer, of 'practising the presence' of the *sthitaprajna* described in Ch. II. "We recite these verses daily so that we may understand their meaning and be guided by them" (p. 127). The ideal person is as a seed sown in one's heart and growing freely there in response to all the predicaments it passes through. The scripture, even the *Gita*, is soil which our mind, as the germinating seed, uses creatively, choosing what ingredients it needs and ignoring the rest. How and how far one should follow the scripture in solving the conflicts of dharma confronting one depends on one's temperament and training. While it is open to all to revel in the poetry of the *Gita* (pp. 233, 292), the earnest seeker should observe *yama* and *niyama* and other rules of discipline, should acquire *adhikara* or fitness, before taking up the study of the *Gita*. To look for ethical guidance there "without having equipped oneself in this manner . . . would be like taking up a study of botany without ever having seen plants" (p. 103). In other words, Gandhiji's approach to the *Gita* is functional and practical, not academic and theoretical. Its enthralling poetry is not a way of escape from life's problems, but an inspiration to follow strenuously the conduct it prescribes for eradicating the ego. We should study and understand the *Gita* "not merely to satisfy our curiosity but with the aim of putting its teaching into practice . . . We should leave alone what we cannot put into practice. It is a misuse of our intellectual energy and a waste of time to go on reading what we cannot put into practice" (pp. 227-8).

Unerringly Gandhiji puts his finger on the *Gita's* 'secret', its whole meaning and purpose, which is to transform or destroy the ego, the separate shape or shadow to which we cling. "There is only one spiritual evil, with only one cause and one remedy. To explain this oneness an extreme example is used. If one's kinsmen deserve to be killed, they ought to be killed. . . . We can follow truth only in the measure that we shed our attachment to the ego" (pp. 106-7). Arjuna's despondency arises not from reluctance to killing as such, but from reluctance to killing one's kinsmen.

In Discourses 41-45 which enlarge the meaning of *yajna*, Gandhiji is only exercising the liberty of interpretation permitted by the orthodox schools. As circumstances change and men become more enlightened, "sons should enrich the legacy of their fathers". One can well imagine a time when a wise man "will mean by the spinning-wheel not an article made of wood but any type of work which provides employment to all people" (p. 154).

In this expanded meaning, *yajna* means "any action performed with a view to public good" (p. 155). And so the cherishing of the gods (Ch. III. 11) means that "we should serve the humblest human beings, even those whom we never see, with respect and honour and looking upon them as gods and not as our servants; we should, in other words, serve the whole world" (p. 156). At the same time Gandhiji's restrained comments on II. 52-3 and IV. 17 show how anxious he is to avoid, in these lay talks, any revolutionary departure from tradition. What is significant in Gandhiji's approach is not originality but an earnest resolve to interrelate and harmonize faith and conduct.

With Gandhiji religion was no formal profession, it was a moral effort and spiritual experience embracing faith and conduct, action feeding knowledge and knowledge illuminating action. Hence karma was not mere ritual or prescribed action. "Activity of every kind is karma" (p. 351). "Even the decision to stop breathing is karma. Even the refraining from karma is karma" (p. 148). ". . . the very process of living is a form of karma . . . no one can escape doing karma" (p. 206).

Since karma is thus inescapable, what the *Gita* does is to integrate it with *jnana* and *bhakti*. "The *Gita* does not give the central importance to karma, nor to *jnana* nor to *bhakti*. . . . Karma, *jnana* and *bhakti*, all three are essential, and each in its place is of central importance" (p. 351). *Jnana* and karma are both excellent, but neither can be practised without the other. It is only knowledge that burns up the bonds of karma and converts it into

akarma. But this knowledge must "sink from the intellect to the heart", must be directly experienced. Food in the vessel or even food in the stomach will not satisfy hunger; "it is only when it is digested in the stomach and converted into blood that we may say that our hunger is satisfied" (p. 219).

And for our *swadharma*, the daily bread which can thus be used to satisfy our spiritual hunger, one need not go searching. It is there waiting for us, "the work which falls to our lot from hour to hour" (p. 369). It comes to us naturally and "grows and expands on its own. We can satisfactorily perform only our dharma, that which lies before us" (p. 365). The strenuous, intelligent and disinterested pursuit of *swadharma* is *karmayoga*, "a royal road, easy to follow. It is the sovereign yoga" (p. 119).

This spiritual *sadhana*, indeed the sovereign yoga, is no special religious action; it is "very much concerned with practical life. A dharma which does not serve practical needs is no dharma, it is *adharma*. Even cleaning of latrines should be done in a religious spirit" (p. 152). But the *Gita*'s karma is "not karma done under compulsion; it must be prompted by . . . knowledge" (p. 352).

When karma is done knowingly and voluntarily and for the sake of the *atman*, it is in reality *akarma*. "If we can renounce the fruits of karma, that is, work only for others, then we may work like horses. On the other hand, when working for ourselves, we should be like a piece of inert matter, have no interest in the work at all. This is a state of the heart, an attitude of mind" (p. 216).

Yajna being work for the benefit of others, "violence committed for the sake of *yajna* is not violence" (p. 353). It is the *yajna bhāvanā* that converts karma into *akarma* and even violence into non-violence. As illustrations of such non-violence Gandhiji cites Harishchandra preparing to cut his wife's throat, a surgeon performing an operation, a compassionate passer-by severing finally a half-cut head (p. 179). *Akarma* means, in practice, reducing the degree of violence involved in each karma (p. 353). "Karma done in the spirit of *yajna*, that is, for the benefit of others, does not bind" (p. 355).

The objection to violence arises not from dogmatic ethics, but from simple psychology. It is our natural human sensitivity which inhibits violence. "The desire to end the suffering of others is . . . *mahaswartha* [the supreme self-interest]" (p. 257). Let us frankly recognize that all our work is prompted by self-interest. But what is self-interest? "If this self-interest is the interest of the *atman*, then

one's work is for the benefit of others. All the activities of such a person will be prompted by the motive of service" (p. 365).

The sight of injustice or underserved suffering stirs us to our depths and causes mental confusion and despondency. "We shall not be cured till we feel a crisis. The experience is like the pangs of childbirth. . . . one feels born again" (p. 362). Instead of turning rabid and attacking others, the non-violent reformer looks inward, recognizes the common humanity of all involved in the given situation, and goes through *tapas* for redeeming one's 'opponents' as well as oneself. In this struggle against evil while befriending all those caught in it, power comes from meekness which mobilizes instead of disintegrating our human strength, physical, intellectual and moral. Physically each one of us is nothing in this vast universe, "in this universe of stars, suns and planets" (p. 376). To overcome this helplessness even the awakened intellect feels powerless. Then Yogeshwara Krishna, the Self abiding in the heart of every being, whispers: "Your intellect by itself will not serve you. You will need to do yoga, karma-yoga" (p. 363).

The evil that once maddened us now acquires a new meaning; it assumes a less substantial and more remediable shape. It existed because we supported it. If we withdraw that support, it will collapse. The world, with all its good and evil, is as much in us as we are in it. "Evil cannot by itself flourish in this world. It can do so only if it is allied with some good" (p. 97). On a total view, "it is not wickedness but goodness which rules the world" (p. 192). Not only that; it is God who permits evil, it is He that appears as Ravana and calls man to heroic action. Evil exists so that in resisting it man may perform *tapas*, gain patience and purity of mind and so grow in knowledge. The example of King Janaka and the teaching of Shri Krishna should prevail over our own experience. "We are imperfect human beings and deduce imperfect principles from our imperfect experience" (p. 364). The truth taught by these masters of action and nobly interpreted by Gandhiji, not only in these 218 informal talks, but in his whole long life, is that the way of karma leads to *jnana*, that sustained, disinterested action and honest self-examination starve the ego out of existence and bring on the joyous realization that "this whole universe exists in God" (p. 218) and that "all selves are one" (p. 280).

NOTE TO THE READER

In reproducing English material, every endeavour has been made to adhere strictly to the original. Obvious typographical errors have been corrected and words abbreviated in the text generally spelt out. Variant spellings of names have, however, been retained as in the original.

Matter in square brackets has been supplied by the Editors. Quoted passages, where these are in English, have been set up in small type and printed with an indent. Indirect reports of speeches and interviews, as also passages which are not by Gandhiji, have been set up in small type. In reports of speeches and interviews slight changes and omissions, where necessary, have been made in passages not attributed to Gandhiji.

While translating from Gujarati and Hindi, efforts have been made to achieve fidelity and also readability in English. Where English translations are available, they have been used with such changes as were necessary to bring them into conformity with the original.

The date of an item has been indicated at the top right-hand corner; if the original is undated, the inferred date is supplied within square brackets, the reasons being given where necessary. The date given at the end of an item alongside the source is that of publication. The writings are placed under the date of publication, except where they carry a date-line or where the date of writing has special significance and is ascertainable.

References to Volume I of this series are to the August 1958 edition. References to *An Autobiography* cite only the Part and Chapter, in view of the varying pagination in different editions.

In the source-line, S.N. stands for documents available in the Sabarmati Sangrahalaya, Ahmedabad; G.N. refers to those available in the Gandhi Smarak Nidhi and Sangrahalaya, New Delhi; C.W. denotes documents secured by the Collected Works of Mahatma Gandhi.

The Appendices provide background material relevant to the text. A list of sources and a chronology for the period covered by the volume are also provided at the end.

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CONTENTS

1. PREFACE TO "SHRIMAD RAJCHANDRA"

November 5, 1926

INTRODUCTION

When Shri Revashanker Jagjivan, whom I regard as an elder brother, asked me for a foreword to this[1] edition of Shrimad Rajchandra's[2] letters and writings, I could not refuse his request. As I tried to think what I could say in such a foreword, I felt that it would serve two purposes if I gave the few chapters of my reminiscences of Rajchandra which I wrote in the Yeravda jail[3]: one, that as my attempt, though incomplete, was undertaken purely in a spirit of religious devotion, it might help other *mumukshus*[4] like me, and two, that those who did not know Shrimad Rajchandra in life might know a little about him and so find it easier to understand some of his writings.

The chapters which follow leave the story incomplete. I do not think that I can complete it, for, even if I get time, I do not feel inclined to go much further than the point where I left off. I, therefore, wish to complete the last chapter, which had remained unfinished, and include in it a few things.

In these chapters I have not touched upon one aspect of the subject which I think I should place before the readers. Some people assert that Shrimad was the twenty-fifth Tirthankar[5]. Some others believe that he has attained *moksha*. Both these beliefs, I think, are improper. Either those who hold them do not know Shrimad or their definitions of Tirthankar or liberated soul are different from the commonly accepted ones. We may not lower the standard of truth even for the sake of those whom we love dearly. *Moksha* is a condition of supreme value. It is the highest state of the *atman*[6]. It is so rare a condition that to attain

[1] Second edition. It cannot be ascertained when the first edition was published.

[2] Rajchandra Ravjibhai Mehta

[3] Gandhiji was in this jail from March 1922 to February 1924.

[4] Seekers after *moksha*, deliverance from phenomenal existence as the supreme end of life

[5] A soul that has risen to perfection and teaches the way to others. Jains believe in 24 such Tirthankars, of whom Mahavira, a contemporary of the Buddha, was the last.

[6] The self

it much more effort and patience are necessary than, say, for emptying the sea drop by drop with a blade of grass. A perfect description of that state is impossible. A Tirthankar will naturally command, without seeking them, the powers which belong to the state immediately preceding *moksha*. One who has attained freedom while still living in this body will suffer from no physical disease. In a body untroubled by desire there can be no disease. There can be no disease where there is no attachment. Where there is desire there is attachment and while there is attachment *moksha* is impossible. Shrimad had not attained the total freedom from attachment which should characterize a *mukta purusha*[1] or the *vibhuti* which belongs to a Tirthankar. He had such freedom and such powers in a much larger measure than the ordinary man or woman, and so in common speech we may describe him as one who was free from attachment or who possessed superhuman powers. I am sure, however, that Shrimad had not attained to the perfect freedom from attachment which we attribute to a *mukta purusha* or acquired the *vibhuti* which we believe that a Tirthankar would manifest. I do not say this with the intention of pointing out any shortcoming in a great character worthy of our highest reverence; I say it in order to do justice both to him and to the cause of truth. We are all worldly creatures, whereas Shrimad was not. We shall have to wander from existence to existence, whereas Shrimad may have only one life more to live. We are perhaps running away from *moksha*, while Shrimad was flying towards it with the speed of wind.

This was no small achievement. Even so, I must say that he had not attained the supreme state so beautifully described by him. He himself said that he had come upon the Sahara in his journey and that he had failed to cross the desert. Shrimad Rajchandra, however, was a rare being. His writings are the quintessence of his experiences. Anyone who reads them, reflects over them and follows them in his life will find the path to *moksha* easier; his yearning for sense-pleasures will become progressively weaker, he will become disinterested in the affairs of this world, will cease to be attached to the life of the body and devote himself to the welfare of the *atman*.

The reader will see from this that Shrimad's writings are meant only for those who are qualified to study them. All readers will not find them interesting. Those who are inclined to be critical will get material for criticism. But those who have faith

[1] A liberated person

will find these writings of absorbing interest. I have always felt that Shrimad's writings breathe the spirit of truth. He did not write a single word in order to show off his knowledge. His aim in his writings was to share his inward bliss with his readers. I am sure that anyone who wishes to free himself from inner conflicts and is eager to know his duty in life will gain much from Shrimad's writings, whether such a reader is a Hindu or belongs to another faith.

And, hoping that the few reminiscences of Shrimad's life which I have written down will help the reader who is qualified to read his writings, I give them here as part of this Foreword.

SOME REMINISCENCES OF RAYCHANDBHAI

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTORY

Today is the birth anniversary of the late Shrimad Rajchandra, whose reminiscences I have started writing, that is, it is the *Kartiki Purnima*[1], Samvat 1979. I am not attempting to write a biography of Shrimad; such an attempt is beyond my capacity. I do not have with me the material needed for a biography. If I wanted to write one, I would spend some time in his birth-place, the port of Vavania[2], examine the house in which he lived, see the places which were the scenes of his childhood play and wanderings, meet his childhood friends, visit the school which he attended, interview his friends, disciples and relatives, and gather from them all information which was likely to be useful; only after I had done all this would I start writing the biography. But I have not visited these places or become acquainted with such persons.

And now I have begun to doubt even my capacity for writing these reminiscences. I remember to have remarked more than once that, if I had the time, I would write such reminiscences. One of his disciples, for whom I feel the highest respect, heard me say this, and I have undertaken this attempt mainly to satisfy him. I would be happy, in any case, to write these reminiscences of Shrimad Rajchandra, whom I used to call Raychandbhai or the Poet, out of my love and respect, and explain their significance to *mumukshus*. As it is, however, my attempt is merely intended to satisfy a friend. To be able to do justice to these reminiscences

[1] The full-moon day of *Kartika*; the day corresponded to November 4, 1922.
[2] In Saurashtra

of his life, I should be well acquainted with the Jain way, which I must admit I am not. I will, therefore, write them from an extremely restricted point of view. I will content myself with a record of my memories of him and of the events in his life which had left an impression on me, and with a discussion of what I learned from those occasions. The benefit which I thus derived, or some benefit similar to that, will perhaps be derived by the reader who is a *mumukshu* from a perusal of these reminiscences.

I have used the word *mumukshu* advisedly. This attempt at writing my reminiscences is not intended for all classes of readers.

Three persons have influenced me deeply, Tolstoy, Ruskin and Raychandbhai: Tolstoy through one of his books and through a little correspondence with him, Ruskin through one book of his, *Unto This Last*—which in Gujarati I have called *Sarvodaya*,—and Raychandbhai through intimate personal contact. When I began to feel doubts about Hinduism as a religion, it was Raychandbhai who helped me to resolve them. In the year 1893, I came into close contact with some Christian gentlemen in South Africa. Their lives were pure, and they were devoted to their religion. Their main work in life was to persuade followers of other faiths to embrace Christianity. Though I had come into contact with them in connection with practical affairs, they began to feel solicitude for my spiritual welfare. I realized that I had one duty : that until I had studied the teachings of Hinduism and found that they did not satisfy my soul, I should not renounce the faith in which I was born. I, therefore, started reading Hindu and other scriptures. I read books on Christianity and Islam. I carried on correspondence with some friends I had made in London. I placed my doubts before them. I entered into correspondence with every person in India in whom I had some trust, Raychandbhai being the chief among them.[1] I had already been introduced to him and a close bond had grown between us. I had respect for him, and so I decided to get from him everything he could give. The result was that I gained peace of mind. I felt reassured that Hinduism could give me what I needed. The reader will have some idea of how much my respect for Raychandbhai must have increased because of his being responsible for this result.

Nevertheless, I have not accepted him as my guru. I am still in search of one, and so far my feeling in regard to everyone

[1] *Vide* Appendix I.

whom I might think of as a guru has been "No, not this". One must have the requisite qualification to come upon a perfect guru, and I cannot claim to have it.

CHAPTER 2

I was introduced to Raychandbhai in July 1891, on the very day on which, returning from England, I landed in Bombay. At this time of the year the sea is stormy. The ship, therefore, had arrived late and it was already night. I stayed with Dr. Pranjivan Mehta, Barrister, now the well-known jeweller of Rangoon. Raychandbhai was his elder brother's son-in-law. The doctor himself introduced me to him. On the same day I was also introduced to Jhaveri Revashanker Jagjivandas, another elder brother of his. The doctor introduced Raychandbhai as "a poet", and added, "though a poet, he is in our business. He is a man of spiritual knowledge and a *shatavadhani*"[1]. Someone suggested that I should utter a number of words in his presence, saying that no matter to what language they belonged he would repeat them in the same order in which I had uttered them. I could not believe this. I was a young man, had just returned from England, and was a little vain, too, of my knowledge of languages; in those days I was under the powerful spell of English. Having been to England made a man feel that he was heaven-born. I poured out all my store of knowledge, and first wrote out words from different languages—for how possibly could I afterwards remember them in their due order? I then read out the words. Raychandbhai repeated them slowly one after another and in the same order. I was pleased and astonished, and formed a high opinion about his memory. This was an excellent experience to break a little the binding spell of English on me.

The Poet did not know English at all. At the time I am speaking of, he was not more than twenty-five. His study in the Gujarati school was not much either. And even then he possessed such a powerful memory and such knowledge, and was respected by everyone round him! I was all admiration. The power of memory is not sold in schools. Knowledge, too, can be acquired without going to school if one wants it—is keen on it—and one need not go to England or elsewhere to command respect, for virtue is always respected. I learned these truths on the very day I landed in Bombay.

[1] One who can pay attention to a hundred things simultaneously

The acquaintance with the poet which began on this occasion grew over the years. Other persons possess a powerful memory, and one need not be dazzled by it. Knowledge of the Shastras, too, is found in plenty in many. But such persons, if they have no real culture, can give us nothing of value. A combination of powerful memory and knowledge of the Shastras will have real worth and will benefit the world only if they exist along with genuine culture of the heart.

CHAPTER 3: VAIRAGYA[1]

When shall I know that state supreme,
When will the knots, outer and inner, snap?
When shall I, breaking the bonds that bind us fast,
Tread the path trodden by the wise and the great?

Withdrawing the mind from all interests,
Using this body solely for self-control,
He desires nothing to serve any ulterior end of his own,
Seeing nothing in the body to bring on a trace of the darkness of ignorance.

These are the first two verses of Raychandbhai's inspired utterance at the age of eighteen.

During the two years I remained in close contact with him, I felt in him every moment the spirit of *vairagya* which shines through these verses. One rare feature of his writings is that he always set down what he had felt in his own experience. There is in them no trace of unreality. I have never read any line by him which was written to produce an effect on others. He had always by his side a book on some religious subject and a note-book with blank pages. The latter he used for noting down any thoughts which occurred to him. Sometimes, it would be prose and sometimes poetry. The poem about the "supreme state" must have been written in that manner.

Whatever he was doing at the moment, whether eating or resting or lying in bed, he was invariably disinterested towards things of the world. I never saw him being tempted by objects of pleasure or luxury in this world.

I watched his daily life respectfully, and at close quarters. He accepted whatever he was served at meals. His dress was simple, a dhoti and shirt, an *angarakhun*[2] and a turban of mixed

[1] State of disinterestedness towards worldly things

[2] A tight-fitting coat of relatively thin cloth, fastened with laces

silk and cotton yarn. I do not remember that these garments used to be strikingly clean or carefully ironed. It was the same to him whether he squatted on the ground or had a chair to sit on. In the shop, he generally squatted on a *gadi*[1].

He used to walk slowly, and the passer-by could see that he was absorbed in thought even while walking. There was a strange power in his eyes; they were extremely bright, and free from any sign of impatience or anxiety. They bespoke single-minded attention. The face was round, the lips thin, the nose neither pointed nor flat and the body of light build and medium size. The skin was dark. He looked an embodiment of peace. There was such sweetness in his voice that one simply wanted to go on listening to him. The face was smiling and cheerful; it shone with the light of inner joy. He had such ready command of language that I do not remember his ever pausing for a word to express his thoughts. I rarely saw him changing a word while writing a letter. And yet the reader would never feel that any thought was imperfectly expressed, or the construction of a sentence was defective or the choice of a word faulty.

These qualities can exist only in a man of self-control. A man cannot become free from attachments by making a show of being so. That state is a state of grace for the *atman*. Anyone who strives for it will discover that it may be won only after a ceaseless effort through many lives. One will discover, if one struggles to get rid of attachments, how difficult it is to succeed in the attempt. The Poet made me feel that this state of freedom from attachment was spontaneous to him.

The first step towards *moksha* is freedom from attachment. Can we ever listen with pleasure to anyone talking about *moksha* so long as our mind is attached to a single object in this world? If at any time we seem to do so, it is only the ear which is pleased, in the same way, that is, as we may be pleased merely by the musical tune of a song without following its meaning. It will be a long time before such indulgence of the ear results in our adopting a way of life which could lead towards *moksha*. Without genuine *vairagya* in the mind, one cannot be possessed with a yearning for *moksha*. The poet was possessed by such yearning.

[1] Cushion

CHAPTER 4: BUSINESS LIFE

He is a true *Vanik*[1] who never speaks an untruth,
He is a true *Vanik* who never gives short measure,
He is a true *Vanik* who honours his father's word,
He is a true *Vanik* who returns the principal with interest.
Good sense is the *Vanik's* measure, and the king's measure his credit.
Should the *Vania*[2] neglect business, suffering like a forest fire spreads far and wide.

SHAMAL BHATT

It is generally believed that the spheres of practical affairs or business and spiritual pursuits or dharma are distinct from and incompatible with each other, that it is madness to introduce dharma into business, for we should succeed in neither if we made any such attempt. If this belief is not false, there is no hope for us at all. There is not a single concern or sphere of practical affairs from where dharma can be kept out.

Raychandbhai showed through his life that, if a man is devoted to dharma, this devotion should be evident in every action of his. It is not true at all that dharma is something to be observed on the *Ekadashi*[3] day or during the *Paryushan*[4], on the *Id*[5] day or on a Sunday, in temples, churches or mosques, but not in the shop or the king's court; on the contrary, Raychandbhai used to say and hold, and demonstrated through his own conduct, that such a belief amounted to ignorance of the nature of dharma.

The business in which he was engaged was that of diamonds and pearls. He carried it on in partnership with Revashanker Jagjivan Jhaveri. He also ran a cloth shop side by side. I formed the impression that he was completely upright in his dealings. I was accidentally present sometimes when he negotiated a deal. His terms were always clear and firm. I never saw any 'cleverness' about them. If the other party tried it, he immediately saw through it, and would not tolerate it. On such occasions, he would even knit his brows in anger, and one could see a flash of redness in his eyes.

Raychandbhai disproved the prevalent idea that a man who is wise in the sphere of dharma will not be wise in the affairs of practical life. He displayed the utmost vigilance and intelli-

[1] A community traditionally engaged in trade and commerce
[2] Same as *Vanik*
[3] Eleventh day of the each half of the lunar month
[4] A week devoted by Jains to fasting and self-purification
[5] A day observed as sacred by Muslims

gence in his business. He could judge the worth of diamonds and pearls with the utmost accuracy. Though he did not know English, he was quick in following the general substance of the letters and telegrams received from his agents in Paris and took no time to see through their tricks. His guesses generally turned out to be correct.

Though he displayed such vigilance and intelligence in his business, he was never impatient or felt worried about his affairs. Even when he was attending the shop, some book on a religious subject would always be lying by his side and, as soon as he had finished dealing with a customer, he would open it, or would open the note-book in which he used to note down the thoughts which occurred to him. Every day he had men like me, in search of knowledge, coming to him. He would not hesitate to discuss religious matters with them. The Poet did not follow the general, and beautiful, rule of doing business and discussing dharma each at its proper time, of attending to one thing at a time. Being a *shatavadhani*, he could afford to violate it. Others who might seek to emulate him would fare as a man trying to ride two horses at the same time. Even for a man who is wholly devoted to dharma and is completely free from attachments, it would be best always to concentrate on what he is engaged in at the moment; in fact that would be the right thing for him to do. That would be a sign of his being a man of yoga. Dharma requires one to act in that manner. If any work, be it business or something else, is a worthy activity, it ought to be done with single-minded attention. For a *mumukshu*, inward meditation on the self should be as spontaneous and continuous as breathing. He should not cease from it even for a moment. But even while meditating on the self, he should be totally absorbed in the work he was doing.

I do not mean to say that the Poet did not live in this way. I have said above that he used to display the utmost vigilance in his business. I did, however, form the impression that the Poet exacted more work from his body than he should have done. Could it possibly mean imperfection in his yoga? It is a principle of dharma that one should even lay down one's life in discharging one's duty. But to undertake work beyond one's capacity and look upon it as one's duty is a form of attachment. I have always felt that the Poet did have this highly subtle attachment in him.

It often happens that man accepts work beyond his capacity through spiritual motives and then finds it difficult to cope with

it. We look upon this as virtue and admire it. But looked at from a spiritual point of view, that is, from the point of view of dharma, there is every possibility that the motive behind such work springs from a subtle form of ignorance.

If we are no more than instruments in this world, if it is true that we are given this body on hire and that our highest duty is to attain *moksha* through it as quickly as we may, then we must certainly give up everything which may serve as an obstacle in our path—that is the only true spiritual attitude.

Raychandbhai himself had explained to me, in a different form and in his own wonderful manner the argument I have advanced above. How, then, did he come to take upon himself certain tasks which worried him and brought on severe illness on him?

If I am right in believing that even Raychandbhai was temporarily overcome with spiritual ignorance in the form of a desire to do good, the truth of the line "All creatures follow their nature, what then will constraint avail?"[1] is very well illustrated in his case, and this is all that it means. There are some who use these words of Krishna to justify self-indulgence; they altogether pervert their meaning. Raychandbhai's *prakriti* took him into deep waters despite himself. To undertake work in this manner may be an error, but it may be considered so only in the case of one who is nearing perfection. We, ordinary men and women, can do justice to a good cause only if we become mad after it. We shall close this argument here.

It is also sometimes believed that religious-minded men are so simple that everyone can deceive them, that they understand nothing about worldly affairs. If this belief is true, then the two avatars, Krishnachandra and Ramachandra, should be looked upon not as incarnations but as mere ordinary men of the world. The Poet used to say that it should be impossible to deceive a person of perfect spiritual knowledge. A person may be religious-minded, that is, may be moral in his life, but may have no spiritual knowledge. What is required for *moksha*, however, is a happy combination of moral life and spiritual knowledge which is the result of one's own experience. In the presence of one who has acquired such knowledge, hypocrisy and fraud cannot keep their mask for long. Untruth cannot flourish in the presence of truth. In the presence of non-violence, violence ceases. Where the light of

[1] *Bhagavad Gita*, III, 33

honesty shines, the darkness of deception vanishes. The moment a man of spiritual knowledge devoted to dharma sees a deceitful man, his heart melts with compassion. How can one who has seen the self in him fail to understand another person? I cannot say that the Poet always demonstrated this truth in his life. People did occasionally cheat him in the name of religion. Such instances do not prove any flaw in the principles, but suggest how very difficult it is to acquire spiritual knowledge of absolute purity.

Despite these limitations, I have not observed in anyone else such a beautiful combination of practical ability and devotion to dharma as I did in the Poet.

Chapter 5: Dharma

Before we examine Raychandbhai's life of dharma, it is necessary to discuss the nature of dharma as explained by him.

Dharma does not mean any particular creed or dogma. Nor does it mean reading or learning by rote books known as Shastras or even believing all that they say.

Dharma is a quality of the soul and is present, visibly or invisibly, in every human being. Through it we know our duty in human life and our true relation with other souls. It is evident that we cannot do so till we have known the self in us. Hence dharma is the means by which we can know ourselves.

We may accept this means from wherever we get it, whether from India or Europe or Arabia. Anyone who has studied the scriptures of different faiths will say that the general nature of this means as expounded in them is the same. No Shastra in any religion says that we may speak untruth or follow it in practice, nor that we may commit violence. Stating the quintessence of all Shastras, Shankaracharya said: "*Brahma satyam jaganmithya.*"[1] The Koran-e-Sharif says the same thing in different words when it asserts that God is one and alone, and that nothing beside Him exists. The Bible says: "I and my Father are one." All these are different statements of the same truth. But imperfect human beings, expounding this one truth through their various understandings, have erected veritable prison-houses from which our minds have to escape. We, imperfect human beings, try to go forward with the help of others less imperfect than we, and imagine that beyond a certain stage there is no further way to go. In truth

[1] The *Brahman* alone is real, the world of appearance is false.

it is not so at all. After a certain stage is reached, the Shastras give no help; experience alone helps then. Hence sang Raychandbhai:

> That state the Blessed one who has attained perfection of knowledge sees in his vision,
> But cannot describe in words;
> I have fixed my eyes on that supreme state as my goal,
> But at persent it is an aspiration beyond my power to realize.[1]

Ultimately, therefore, it is the *atman* which wins *moksha* for itself.

Raychandbhai has expounded this essential truth in numerous ways in his writings. He had made a deep study of a number of books on dharma. He could follow Sanskrit and Magadhi languages without any difficulty. He had studied Vedanta, as also the *Bhagavata* and the *Gita*. As for books on Jain religion, he used to read every such book that he came across. His capacity for reading and absorbing was inexhaustible. He found one reading enough for grasping the substance of a book.

He had also read in translation the Koran and the Zend-Avesta.

He used to tell me that he was inclined towards Jain philosophy. He believed that the *Jinagamas*[2] contained the perfection of spiritual knowledge. It is necessary that I should state this view of his. I look upon myself as altogether unqualified to express an opinion on it.

Raychandbhai did not, however, lack respect for other faiths. He even felt admiration for Vedanta. A *vedantin*[3] would naturally take the Poet to be a *vedantin*. In all his discussions with me, he never told me that if I wished to attain *moksha* I should follow a particular dharma and no other. He advised me only to pay attention to my actions. When we discussed what books I should read, he took into consideration my personal inclination and the early family influences on me and advised me to continue the *Gita* which I was then reading. Other books which he suggested were *Panchikaran*, *Maniratnamala*, the chapter on *Vairagya* in *Yogavasishtha*, *Kavyadohan* Part I, and *Mokshamala* composed by himself.

[1] Probably, through a slip of memory, Gandhiji has here brought together the first two lines of stanza 20 and the first two of stanza 21.

[2] Sacred books of the Jains

[3] Follower of Vedanta

Raychandbhai used to say that the different faiths were like so many walled enclosures in which men and women were confined. He whose one aim in life is to attain *moksha* need not give exclusive devotion to a particular faith.

> Live as you will,
> Attain to Hari anyhow.

This was Raychandbhai's principle too, as it was Akha's[1]. He was always bored by religious controversy and rarely engaged himself in it. He would study and understand the excellence of each faith and explain it to the followers of that faith. Through my correspondence with him from South Africa, too, this is the lesson which I learned from him.

My own belief is that every religion is perfect from the point of view of its followers and imperfect from that of the followers of other faiths. Examined from an independent point of view, every religion is both perfect and imperfect. Beyond a certain stage, every Shastra becomes a fetter hindering further progress; but, then, that is the stage reached by one who has transcended the *gunas*. If we follow Raychandbhai's point of view, no one need give up his faith and embrace another. Everyone may, following his own faith, win his freedom, that is, *moksha*, for to win *moksha* means to be perfectly free from attachments and aversions.

MOHANDAS KARAMCHAND GANDHI

[From Gujarati]
Shrimad Rajchandra

2. *LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA*

Diwali [*November 5, 1926*][2]

BHAI GHANSHYAMDASJI,

I was very much pleased to have your long letter. I had heard slanderous remarks made about you. I did not believe them, but your letter has completely satisfied me. They said that you took work by giving Rs. 500[3] instead of a hundred. From what you have written, I have nothing to say.

[1] A Gujarati poet of the 17th century

[2] The reference to addressee's proposed trip to Geneva suggests that the letter was written in 1926. Diwali fell on November 5 in that year.

[3] Perhaps a slip for Rs. 50

As for Geneva, I must advise you to be patient. I see no great benefit in your going there. If the experience of the West is necessary, go on your own. You will have many occasions to go. But my inner self says it is not today. In the end you should do what your conscience dictates.

Yours,
MOHANDAS GANDHI

From a copy of the Hindi: C.W. 6137. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

3. *MESSAGE TO "FORWARD"*

As heirs to the great legacy left by him[1], he must deserve it by our action.

Forward, 6-11-1926

4. *IS THIS HUMANITY?–V*[2]

[*November 7, 1926*][3]

A friend writes a long letter mentioning his difficulties and pointing out what Jainism has to say to him, a *shrawak*, in the matter. One of his questions is:

> You say that if we can neither take individual charge of roving dogs nor have a *pinjrapole* for them, the only alternative is to kill them. Does that mean that every roving dog should be killed, although it may not be rabid? Don't you agree that we leave unmolested all harmful beasts, birds and reptiles, so long as they do not actually harm us? Why should the dogs be an exception? Where is the humanity of shooting innocent dogs whenever they are found roving? How can one wishing well to all living beings do this?

The writer has misunderstood my meaning. I would not suggest even the destruction of rabid dogs for the sake of it, much less that of innocent, roving dogs. Nor have I said that these latter should be killed wherever they are found. I have only suggested legislation to that effect, so that as soon as the law is made, humane people might wake up in the matter and devise

[1] C. R. Das

[2] For the first four articles of the series, *vide* Vol. XXXI. Originally written in Gujarati, the articles were translated into English by Mahadev Desai.

[3] The articles are placed according to the dates of their publication in *Navajivan*.

measures for the better management of stray dogs. Some of these might be owned, some might be put in quarantine. The remedy, when it is taken, will be once for all. Stray dogs do not drop down from heaven. They are a sign of the idleness, indifference and ignorance of society. When they grow into a nuisance, it is due to our ignorance and want of compassion. A stray dog is bound to take to his heels if you do not feed him. The measure that I have suggested is actuated no less by a consideration of the welfare of the dogs than by that of society. It is the duty of a humanitarian to allow no living being aimlessly to roam about. In performance of that duty it may be his duty once in a way to kill some dogs.

Here is another question:

> I agree that the dogs are sure to be killed by man whenever they become a menace to society. But you say, 'To wait until they get rabid is not to be merciful to them.' This means that every dog is potentially rabid and that therefore it should be killed as a matter of precaution. I met a friend from the Ashram who assured me that you did not mean this, and that you had suggested it only as a last resort when dogs had become a menace. This is not clear from your articles. Will you make it clear?

My previous articles and my answer to the first question leave nothing to be cleared. I must explain what I mean when you say that you cannot wait on until the dog gets rabid. Every stray dog is harmful. The harm is [not] confined to cities alone and it must stop. We do not wait until the serpent bites us. The rabies of the dog is concealed in its capacity to bite. A friend has sent me figures of cases of hydrophobia treated in the Civil Hospital, Ahmedabad:

Period	Cases from the city	Cases from the district	Total
Jan. to Dec. '25	194	923	117
Jan. to Sept. '26	295	695	990

These figures must alarm everyone who is interested in the welfare of the community, especially if he is a humanitarian. I admit that all the cases may not have been of hydrophobia. But it is difficult to say whether a dog is or is not rabid, and many run in fear to the hospital, because most dogs are found to be rabid afterwards. There is only one remedy to relieve them of this fear and it is not to allow dogs to roam about.

I was in England 40 years ago when effective measures were taken to stamp out rabies. There were, of course, no stray dogs

there. But even for the dogs which had regular owners, an order was passed that dogs found without collars with the name and address of the owner thereon and without muzzles would be killed. The measure was taken purely in the public interest. Practically the next day all the dogs in London were found to be with collars and muzzles. It was, therefore, necessary to kill only a very few. If anyone thinks that the people in the West are innocent of humanity, he is sadly mistaken. The ideal of humanity in the West is perhaps lower, but their practice of it is very much more thorough than ours. We rest content with a lofty ideal and are slow or lazy in its practice. We are wrapped in deep darkness, as is evident from our paupers, cattle and other animals. They are eloquent of our irreligion rather than of religion.

Here is a third question:

> You have different definitions of religion for the individual and for society. But why should not religion in both cases be the same? The ideal ought to be the same for both. That it may be impossible to carry it out is a different matter. For, even in case of the individual, only the occasion can show how far he has been able to carry out his ideal in practice. You yourself have said that your ideal is to save even a cruel animal at the risk of your life, but you could not say what you would actually do when faced by such an animal. There is no reason why society should not similarly have a lofty ideal and leave the individuals free to practise it according to their capacity.

My definition of religion for the individual and for society is the same. The ideal must always be the same, but the practice I have conceived to be different in the case of the individual and the society. Truly speaking, practice differs in case of every individual. I do not know of two men having the same extent of the practice of ahimsa, though their definition of ahimsa is the same. The extent of practice in case of society is the average of the different capacities of its members. Thus, for instance, where a section of the society is milk-arian and the other fruitarian, the practice for the society extends to the use of milk and fruit.

The writer next sets out two Jain doctrines as follows:

> Jainism is based on the doctrine of *syadvada*—manysidedness of reality. As is aptly said: 'No absolute rule is correct; only the relative rule is the correct rule.' Which means that an act which may be described as *himsa* under certain circumstances may be ahimsa under other circumstances. Man should always use his discrimination

in determining his conduct. There are two classes of Jains. Sadhus (the monks) and *shrawaks* (the laity). Their code of conduct is thus defined: The sadhu is always non-violent. He may not eat to save himself, may not cook for himself, may not walk even a step for his own purpose—all his activity is for the welfare of the community and it should be as harmless as possible. He has to avoid the 42 infringements laid down in the Shastras. The sadhu is described as *nirgrantha*—free from bonds. So far as I know there is no sadhu today who can satisfy the definition of a sadhu given above.

The *shrawak* may not kill or injure any living being, except when it is essential for himself. He is a worldly man and he cannot take his humanity farther than this. So if 20 per cent compassion is expected of the sadhu, 1.25 per cent is expected of the *shrawak*. If the latter goes beyond the measure expected of him he approaches the state of a sadhu, but *as a shrawak* nothing more is expected of him.

I knew the substance of this distinction. I am quite conscious that the Jain doctrine is not contrary to the opinion I have expressed in these articles. If the Jains accept the interpretation given above, the opinion expressed by me can be deduced from it. But whether they accept it or not, I humbly submit that my opinion is capable of being, and has been, independently justified.

Young India, 11-11-1926

5. *ABOUT MADHADA ASHRAM*

Bhai Shivji had sent to the newspapers a statement in reply to my article[1] regarding Madhada Ashram and himself. This statement he has now sent to me for publication; but as it has already appeared in the daily newspapers, I see no need to publish it here. However, as a certain portion of it referring to his relations with me is of interest to the public, I give below my reply to it.

I was sad to read Bhai Shivji's statement. He has adopted the proverbial method of the thief attacking the warder.

There are no differences of opinion between Bhai Shivji and myself. But I have formed a certain opinion regarding his character and his management of affairs on the basis of Shivji's own confessions. This opinion I conveyed to the executive committee of the Kathiawar Political Conference, and I proposed, as I felt

[1] *Vide* Vol. XXXI, pp. 470-2.

bound, to publish it in the *Navajivan*. But before I did so, I wrote to Bhai Shivji, so as to avoid any injustice being done to him. The question before me was whether I should or should not publish my opinion about Bhai Shivji. This cannot be described as a difference of opinion.

It was certainly I who suggested the idea of the *Panch*. That was for Bhai Shivji's satisfaction and not for mine. There are no allegations against me. Being a public worker I had the duty of making an inquiry into the charges against a colleague. I started the inquiry and, as it was being made, I kept Bhai Shivji informed about it. Finally, I had a meeting with him, and in view of the confessions which he then made there remained nothing more for me to do. Bhai Shivji was found guilty on his own admission. When the case was placed before the committee of the Conference on the same day, and when it became imperative for me to publish it in the *Navajivan*, Bhai Shivji changed his attitude.

If Bhai Shivji or any of his friends wish to know from me the details of the confessions made by Shivji, together with the details of the inquiry that I had made, then I am willing to write to them these details. Bhai Shivji and his friends are at liberty to publish my correspondence with them or with others on this matter. I do not wish to bore the readers by publishing it myself.

I must, however, say that Bhai Shivji's behaviour in every respect, after my inquiry about him, has confirmed my opinion against him. First, I was the judge and others were the complainants. They had given money to Bhai Shivji. When my viewpoint became unacceptable to Bhai Shivji, even I was declared to be a complainant. Now Bhai Shivji, in his statement, seems to consider me at fault. But he and all those who are interested in the social workers obeying more or less the rules and regulations of morality, and who desire faultless management of public funds should know that the proposal to appoint the *Panch* was for the benefit of Bhai Shivji. He is still guilty in my opinion. His lapses are grave and he has confessed most of them. The *panchnama*[1], which I could never have signed, was drawn up, as far as I know, by Bhai Shivji himself. By issuing this statement Bhai Shivji has added salt to the wound and made his guilt worse.

[From Gujarati]
Navajivan, 7-11-1926

[1] A written statement announcing the appointment of arbitrators

6. LETTER TO BANARASIDAS CHATURVEDI

Kartika Sud 3, 1983 [November 8, 1926]

BHAI BANARASIDASJI,

I have your letter. I like the idea of your going to S.A. but the purpose of it does not seem very justifiable to me. If you want to earn your livelihood by going there and writing for the newspapers, the purpose will not be served by your going to South Africa. It will be better if you write a book or take up a job in order to earn money.

Yours,
MOHANDAS GANDHI

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2574

7. LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

Kartika Sud 3, 1983 [November 8, 1926]

CHI. JAMNALAL,

I have your letter. I had completely forgotten the election affair. I see no difficulty in your doing what you think proper. I have written to everyone concerned that I can never participate in it. I would not approve of it if you have to visit many places. It would harm your health.

Ba is completely well, so there is no need to worry. Let us see what happens when I come. There must be many candidates. I intend to bring Lakshmidas with me so that he may have a change.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2876

8. LETTER TO SYED ZAHIRUL HAQ

SABARMATI,
November 10, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter.[1] It may flatter my pride, but I hope I have none. I am conscious of my unfitness and limitations. If there was the slightest chance of successful intervention, my seclusion would not deter me. But I see none. I therefore remain still and pray.

The spinning-wheel is not dearer to me than precious lives. I take to it as a child to its mother's breasts, because I believe it to possess the capacity of saving millions of lives from penury and degradation. I commend it to you.

Yours sincerely,

The Hindu, 19-11-1926

9. LETTER TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

November 10, 1926

MY DEAR C. R.,

Your letter. The dogs are giving enough food for *Navajivan*. They have also increased the sale of postage stamps. And it is all to the good.[2]

Chhotalal leaves for your place on 16th. So he thinks. He won't be happy till he gets there. He is a beautiful, restless soul. Work, work, work.

I think you should come to Wardha. It is a long journey but, if you can at all spare yourself, do come. Not to go to Gauhati is a sound decision.

[1] Syed Zahirul Haq of Barh, Patna, had, in an open letter dated October 25, 1926, drawn Gandhiji's attention to the communal riots in Howrah on the occasion of Durga Puja and appealed to him to "leave your Ashram and rescue the people as a saviour of the nation from the deep ditch they are going to fall into". The 'open letter' as well as Gandhiji's reply was published in *The Hindu* under the caption: "Hindu-Muslim Disharmony: Mahatmaji's Reply to Call for Intervention". The correspondence was also published in *The Searchlight*, 26-11-1926.

[2] The reference obviously is to the series of articles published under the title "Is This Humanity?". *Vide* Vol. XXXI.

I think with you about the agricultural commission. I hope to write something next week.

Devdas was here for a day. He has gone to Panchgani to replace Pyarelal who has gone to Punjab to nurse a cousin of his.

Yours,
BAPU

From a photostat: S.N. 19728

10. LETTER TO V. L. PHADKE

Kartika Sud 5, 1983, November 10, 1926

BHAI MAMA,

I have not been silent of purpose. I have written about that portion of your letter which called for a note. I shall start the series of articles and I shall send you the portion about Godhra before publishing it. I think there should be no objection to purchasing the Ramachandran water-lift[1]. Some difficulties have, however, arisen in securing it. I have helped you as much as I could.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3816

11. PROSTITUTION OF IDEALS

I extract the following from a letter on the remarriage of child widows:

> In your reply to B., Agra, in the *Young India* of September 23,[2] you say that child widows should be remarried by their parents. How can this be done by those parents who perform *kanyadan*, i.e., who give their daughters in marriage according to Shastric injunctions? Surely, it is impossible for parents who have most solemnly and by religious rites renounced all claims on their daughter in favour of their son-in-law to give her in marriage after his death to another person. She may of her own accord remarry if she will, but since she was given by her parents

[1] A large-size bucket contrivance devised by Shri Ramachandran of Agriculture College, Madras, for drawing water from wells with the help of only one animal

[2] *Vide* Vol. XXXI, p. 443.

> as a gift or donation (*dan*) to her husband, no one in the world after the death of her husband has any right to give her in marriage. And for the same reason she herself does not possess any right to remarry. She would, therefore, be faithless and a traitress to her dead husband if she remarried without his express consent given at the time of his death. From a logical point of view, it is thus impossible for a widow—be she child, young or old—who was married according to *kanyadan* system, which is prevalent amongst most *sanatanis*, to remarry unless her husband had given her permission to do so. A true *sanatani* husband cannot, however, brook the idea of giving such permission. He will rather fain agree to his wife's becoming *sati*, if she can or, at any rate, will like her to spend the rest of her life in devotion to his memory or, which is the same thing, in devotion to God. In this he will solely be actuated by the desire or sense of duty to help the preservation of the high ideals of Hindu marriage and widowhood, which are complementary to and not independent of each other.

I regard this kind of argument as prostitution of a high ideal. No doubt the correspondent means well, but his over-anxiety about purity of woman makes him lose sight of elementary justice. What is *kanyadan* in the case of little children? Has a father any rights of property over his children? He is their protector, not owner. And he forfeits the privilege of protection when he abuses it by seeking to barter away the liberty of his ward. Again, how can a donation be made to a child who is incapable of receiving a gift? There is no gift where the capacity to receive is lacking. Surely *kanyadan* is a mystic, religious rite with a spiritual significance. To use such terms in their literal sense is an abuse of language and religion. One may as well take literally the mystic language of the *Puranas* and believe in the earth being a flat dish sustained on the hood of a thousand-headed snake and Divinity lying in soft ease on an ocean of milk for his bed.

The least that a parent, who has so abused his trust as to give in marriage an infant to an old man in his dotage or to a boy hardly out of his teens, can do is to purge himself of his sin by remarrying the daughter when she becomes widowed. As I have said in a previous note[1], such marriages should be declared null and void from the beginning.

Young India, 11-11-1926

[1] *Vide* Vol. XXXI, pp. 377-81.

12. *HANDLOOM* v. *SPINNING-WHEEL*

It seems now to be generally recognized that India, having more than 71 per cent of her population as agriculturists most of whom are idle for nearly six months in the year, needs a supplementary industry and that that industry to be universal can only be hand-spinning. But some contend that hand-weaving is better because it is more remunerative and, therefore, a better proposition.

Now let us understand this argument in some detail. It is said that hand-weaving gives about eight annas per day as against one anna from hand-spinning. Therefore, if a person works for only two hours per day, he will earn from hand-weaving two annas against one pice in the same time from hand-spinning. It is added that one pice would be no economic attraction to anybody and that, if hand-weaving could be presented to the people, it would be wrong to ask them to do hand-spinning *instead*. The protagonists of the handloom contend further that there is no difficulty about getting as much mill-spun yarn as may be required for India's needs, and, finally, they say that even for the sake of keeping alive hand-weaving, which has hitherto defied the competition of weaving-mills, it should be pushed with vigour and determination. Some of the protagonists of hand-weaving even go so far as to say that the hand-spinning movement is mischievous in that it turns people's attention away from the possible industry of hand-weaving and misleads them into supporting an impossible industry which has died of its own inherent weakness.

Let us test this specious-looking argument.

In the first instance, hand-weaving is not a practicable proposition as a supplementary industry, because it is not easy to teach, it has never been universal in India, it requires several hands to work at, it cannot be done during odd moments. It has been and can only be generally an independent occupation and is in the majority of cases the sole occupation like shoe-making or smithy.

Moreover hand-weaving cannot be universal in the same sense that hand-spinning can be. India needs 4,661 million yards of cloth per year. A weaver weaves on an average three quarters of a yard per hour of rough khaddar. Therefore, if all foreign, indigenous or mill-made cloth could be excluded, at the most nine

million weavers working at the rate of two hours per day would be required to produce the whole of our annual requirements. If it be contended that not so many weavers but so many families would be occupied, then the two annas for two hours would have to be distributed among many, thus materially reducing the earnings of the individual per day.

Now let us consider the possibilities of spinning. We know that it was at one time the *universal* supplementary industry of India. Millions have not yet forgotten the art and tens of thousands have even now spinning-wheels in their homes. Hand-spinning is therefore capable of immediate and limitless extension. And as it has been found that ten spinners supply one weaver, against nine million weavers ninety million spinners would be able to add to their earnings what to them will be a material and welcome addition, i.e., at least 25 per cent of their income. I have assumed the very high figure of 40 rupees per year per head to be the average income. Unlike weaving, spinning may be interrupted any moment and, therefore, it can be done during all odd moments. Spinning is learnt easily and quickly and the spinner begins to draw some thread from the very commencement.

Moreover, it is wrong to rely upon an unfailing supply of mill-yarn. Hand-weaving and mill-weaving are not complementary propositions. They are mutually antagonistic, the tendency of weaving mills, like all machinery, always being to displace the product of the hand. If, therefore, hand-weaving could become a supplementary industry on a large scale, it would have to be solely dependent on mills which would naturally squeeze the last pie from the weaver for the supply of yarn and would scrap it at the first opportunity.

On the other hand, hand-spinning and hand-weaving are mutually complementary, as can be today proved from the experience of the existing spinning depots. Even as I write, I have letters from co-workers saying that in their centres they have to send away weavers for want of yarn.

It is little known that a vast number of weavers of mill yarn are in the hands of *sowcars*, and they must be, so long as they rely upon the mill product. The village economy demands that the weaver should receive his yarn not from the middleman but from his fellow-worker the farmer.

Again, so far as can be ascertained, there are at present some twenty lakhs of weavers at work. Every additional loom means an outlay of at least Rs. 15. Every additional wheel need not mean more than Rs. 3½. The Khadi Pratishthan pattern costs only

Rs. 2½. And, at a pinch, even an improvised *takli* which need not cost anything can be impressed into service.

Thus, the spinning-wheel appears to be the only foundation on which satisfactory village life can be constructed. It is the centre round which alone it is possible to build up village reorganization.

But it is said that one pice per two hours is no economic attraction to even the poor villager. In the first place, the wheel is not meant for, it is not now presented to, any person who has a more remunerative employment. How is it that thousands of women are today walking a few miles daily or weekly to receive raw cotton and the few pice for the yarn they deliver? If a loom were suggested to them, they would not take it up, they would not have the time or the ability for it. Town-dwellers have no notion of the gnawing poverty of the masses of India. Let us not talk of the machine age in their case. The machinery of Manchester has robbed them of the butter to their bread which the wheel was, for it has been replaced by nothing else equal to it or better. For these, therefore, the spinning-wheel is their only hope.

I do not here examine the more ambitious but chimerical proposals for agricultural improvements. There is room enough for them, I have no doubt. But that is a matter of time and education, whereas the ever-growing poverty demands an immediate remedy which the wheel alone supplies. The wheel does not displace or disregard possibilities in the shape of such improvements. It is a prelude to them. Wherever it has gone, it is affecting the lives of villagers in a variety of ways and it enables the townspeople to establish a living contact with the villagers and their villages.

"If hand-spinning is all you say, how is it that it has not already been universally adopted?", asks the critic. The question is quite fair. The answer is simple. The message of the wheel has to be carried to a people who have no hope, no initiative left in them and who would, if left to themselves, starve and die rather than work and live. Such was not the case before, but long neglect has made laziness a habit with them. That laziness can only be removed by the living contact and example of men of character and industry plying the wheel before them and by gently showing them the way. The second great difficulty is the absence of a ready market for khaddar. I confess that it cannot for the time being compete with mill-cloth. I will not engage in any such killing competition. The capitalist may for capturing the market sell his calico for nothing. The manufacturer whose only capital is labour cannot afford to do so. Can there be any

competition between the dead artificial rose, however symmetrical it may be, and the living rose whose two petals will not be alike, or can there be any competition between a wax statue of Cromwell and the living one? Khaddar is a living thing. But India has lost her eye for the real art and is, therefore, satisfied with the glossy exterior. Revive the healthy national taste for khaddar and you will find every village a busy hive. As it is, the resources of khaddar organizations are taxed to the utmost in order to create a market for the article. The marvel is that in spite of heavy odds against it, the movement is making headway. Over twelve lacs worth of khaddar was sold only last year. But it is nothing to boast of when one thinks of what needs to be done.

I have thus summarized the case for the spinning-wheel as a supplementary industry as against the handloom. Let there be no confusion of thought. I am not against the handloom. It is a great and thriving cottage industry. It will progress automatically if the spinning-wheel succeeds. It is bound to die if the wheel fails.

I invite criticism of the argument and shall gladly retrace my steps if the argument or the facts cannot be sustained.

Young India, 11-11-1926

13. COW-PROTECTION

A correspondent writes:

> As most of the Hindus intuitively feel that the cow should be protected at all events, I too do so. I had witnessed the miserable sight of starving cows in their prime of life, being sold in lots, to Mussalman hide merchants in the famine-stricken areas of the Ceded Districts.
>
> The Hindu scriptures alone seem to have enjoined cow-protection on its followers. I have been trying to understand the philosophy of it. If the cow has to be protected purely from selfish motives, on account of its continuous utility from its birth till after its death, cow-protection should have become universal and not confined to Hindus alone, for, mankind by instinct is selfish. If, on the other hand, it has to be protected on account of its meek and harmless nature, there are other animals as the sheep and deer which also equally require human protection. What then is the special virtue in the cow, exclusively known or useful to the Hindu, over other domestic animals at any rate? If Hindus, not excluding the vegetarian and orthodox sections, are entitled to kill buffaloes, goats, sheep, etc., for, purposes of food or sacrifice, what right have we to resent Mussalmans killing the cow for sacrifice or

food? Would not the appeal of the Hindus to the Mussalmans to protect the cow be more reasonable and effective, if we Hindus ourselves gave up animal killing for food or sacrifice?

There is much to be said in favour of the argument adopted by the correspondent. But man does not govern himself by logic. He is a complex being; therefore, a multiplicity of considerations act upon him and move him to do or to refrain from doing things. Logically speaking, therefore, a Hindu who protects the cow should protect every animal. But taking all things into consideration, we may not cavil at his protecting the cow because he fails to protect the other animals. The only question, therefore, to consider is whether he is right in protecting the cow. And he cannot be wrong in so doing if non-killing of animals generally may be regarded as a duty for one who believes in ahimsa. And every Hindu, and for that matter every man of religion, does so. The duty of not killing animals generally and, therefore, protecting them must be accepted as an indisputable fact. It is then so much to the credit of Hinduism that it has taken up cow-protection as a duty. And he is a poor specimen of Hinduism who stops merely at cow-protection when he can extend the arm of protection to other animals. The cow merely stands as a symbol, and protection of the cow is the least he is expected to undertake. But, as I have shown already in my previous writings, he is failing even in this elementary obligation.

The motive that actuates cow-protection is not 'purely selfish', though selfish consideration undoubtedly enters into it. If it was purely selfish, the cow would be killed as in other countries after it had ceased to give full use. The Hindus will not kill the cow even though she may be a heavy burden. The numberless *goshalas* that have been established by charitably-minded people for tending disabled and useless cows is in a way an eloquent testimony of the effort that is being made in the direction. Though they are today very poor institutions for the object to be achieved, the fact does not detract from the value of the motive behind the act.

The philosophy of cow-protection therefore is, in my opinion, sublime. It immediately puts the animal creation on the same level with man so far as the right to live is concerned. But it is no part of Hinduism to prevent by force cow-slaughter by those who do not believe in cow-protection. Hindus will bring the Mussalmans and the rest of the world to their way of thinking only by living the religion of ahimsa as fully as it is humanly possible.

They must rely upon the working of the great principle in their own lives and making its effective appeal to the outer world. They will not convert the latter by force of arms. They certainly can by force of ahimsa. We little realize the matchless potency of ahimsa when it is thoroughly put into active operation.

Young India, 11-11-1926

14. TAKLI IN SCHOOLS

Dr. Profulla Chandra Ghosh of Khadi Pratishthan sends me the following notes on the introduction of *takli* in schools:[1]

I congratulate the authorities in charge of the Malikanda national school. A spinning-wheel is any day superior to the *takli* for obtaining a larger quantity of yarn. And I have never intended to give absolute preference to the *takli* over the wheel. But I have little doubt in my mind that, in the large number of schools we have, the *takli* yields better results than the spinning-wheel as has been amply shown by general experience. The reasons are obvious. School-rooms are too small to accommodate the spinning-wheels for all the boys and girls. Secondly, even if room could be found, they are far too expensive compared to the *takli*. Thirdly, the wheel frequently goes out of order and neither the school masters nor the pupils are able to set them right in a moment. Once the wheel goes out of order, it often takes a long time to repair it. It is not possible to supervise the work of a large number of boys spinning at the wheel. On the other hand, the *takli* is incredibly cheap. It can be worked by thousands at a time. It can be handled even in a crowded room requiring practically no space for its accommodation. It rarely goes out of order and when it does, it can be instantaneously replaced. *Takli*-spinning can be supervised no matter how many pupils engage in the operation. The quantitative result of mass spinning on the *takli* is on the whole more satisfactory than on the wheel. But having said all this in praise of the *takli*, needless to say I can have no objection to any school taking up the wheel in preference to the *takli* if it can overcome the objections mentioned by me.

Young India, 11-11-1926

[1] Not reproduced here. The correspondent had argued, giving figures about the progress in spinning on the charkha by boys of the national school at Malikanda, Dacca, that it could not be said that *takli* was always to be preferred to the charkha in schools. That could be done only in the case of the younger boys who could not ply the charkha.

15. NOTES

Khaddar and Government Servants

A correspondent says:

> Some of the Government servants are terribly afraid to purchase hand-spun and hand-woven cleth when our hawkers approach them. They are under the impression that they should not purchase khaddar, yet the Bombay Government is openly appealing to the people to encourage Indian industries. Can you say whether the Madras Government servants are allowed to purchase hand-spun and hand-woven cloth without fear of the Government?

I wish I could answer the question. But I have not the power. It is however inconceivable to me that any Government should proscribe the use of hand-spun and hand-woven cloth. It is possible to conceive the insistence on a form of dress, but certainly not the kind of cloth to be used. It is painful to find that there are Government servants who labour under imaginary fears. I have seen many Government servants making free use of khaddar without let or hindrance. If I was a servant of the Madras Government, I should unhesitatingly wear khaddar unless there was positive prohibition to the contrary in which case I should resign.

Khadi Work and Volunteers

Dr. Hardiker has sent me the programme of the work to be done by the Karnatak Branch of the Hindustani Seva Dal. I take the following from the copy before me:

> The organizers and workers of the Karnatak Branch of the Hindustani Seva Dal met at the Dal Office, Hubli, on the 13th, 14th and 15th October, 1926, with Mr. Hoskoppa Krishnarao in the chair and after full discussion passed the following resolutions regarding the future programme of work to be undertaken by them:
>
> *Resolution* 1: This meeting of the organizers and workers of the Karnatak Dal resolves that they should concentrate their attention on the following programme:
>
> (a) To sell khaddar worth Rs. 40,000 (forty thousand) in Karnatak within seventy-two appointed days beginning from the 1st of February 1927 to the 13th midnight of April 1927 (including the National Week), under a scheme to be settled finally by Dr. Hardiker and Mr.

Hoskoppa Krishnarao, in consultation with Mahatma Gandhi, Sjts. G. B. Deshpande and S. V. Kowjalgi.

Note: The commencement of work under this item has to be postponed to 1st February, 1927, in view of the Assam Congress necessitating the Dal's concentrated activities at Gauhati during the preceding period commencing from the middle of November.

This is a good khadi programme. The Dal will have done well if it is carried out. Let me point out from my own experience and that of co-workers that khadi work will not flourish unless the principal workers know the science of ginning, carding, spinning and can distinguish between the different varieties of cotton and know genuine khadi from the spurious article. Khadi work to succeed evokes all the best that is in one. I shall watch the progress of the programme with considerable interest. There was another resolution passed by the Dal inviting me to visit the Province next year during the sale days. I should not give much credit to the volunteers if they expect to sell only 40,000 worth of khaddar with me as one of the sellers. The members should know that I put a fairly high price on my presence. They will have to put before me a more attractive programme than they have prepared if they are to draw me. And they must know that I am but one bride with many suitors to please. And as I do not believe in polyandry, the winner will have to offer a tempting dowry. It would be well for them therefore not to build any hope on my going to Karnatak early next year.

KHADI AMONGST NON-BRAHMINS

A correspondent writes:

> You will be glad to learn that the non-Brahmins of Nipani are taking a keen interest in khadi. It is the one platform on which Brahmins and non-Brahmins are uniting. There was a large meeting on the 23rd of October. It was a good meeting. Mr. Rawan was present at the meeting and he gave his whole-hearted support to khadi although he said that he continued to abide by the non-Brahmin party's programme of work. A khadi bhandar was opened at Nipani. This was chiefly due to the exertion of Sheth Mulji Sicca of Cutch. He has promised to sell khaddar at cost price. The non-Brahmin friends seem to be convinced that the question of growing poverty of the masses, which term includes non-Brahmins, cannot be solved without the universal use of khadi. The Nipani leaders therefore feel that it is not enough to be hostile to khadi but it is necessary to encourage khadi by all available means.

I congratulate the non-Brahmin friends of Nipani upon their decision, and hope that they will organize khadi work so as to place it on a stable basis.

Spinning in Schools

The following report about the progress of spinning in the schools under Guntur Municipality will be read with interest:

> The number of schools is 35.
>
> Girls' schools 9 and boys' schools 26. There are 454 girls and 363 boys. The number of girls spinning is 70 and that of boys 60. 15 charkhas are supplied to the boys' schools and 17 to the girls' schools. During the year the boys have spun 24,000 yds. and the girls 26,000 yds. The boys' yarn weighs 118 *tolas* and the girls' yarn 130 *tolas*. The Municipality purchased 3 maunds of slivers for Rs. 46-8-0. The yarn is in the Municipal office. About 100 of the pupils wear khadi. The number of all the teachers is 87. Out of them 30 are women and 57 are men. Almost all wear khadi. 63 give yarn to the A.I.S.A. One is also a Congress member under the yarn subscription rule.
>
> Rs. 500 worth of khadi was purchased.
>
> Spinning is taught in 10 schools at present. Hindi was being taught in 10 schools but was discontinued owing to an adverse resolution of the Municipal Council.
>
> Khadi is being freely distributed to *Panchama* boys and poor boys. Caste teachers are working in *Panchama* schools and *Panchama* teachers are teaching in schools where high-caste Hindus are studying.
>
> Holidays are being granted on the occasion of the birthday or anniversary of the national heroes.
>
> All teachers are able to spin. Their yarn is in the Municipal office. A charkha has been supplied to every teacher. About two maunds of slivers are used by the teachers.
>
> The other employees of the Municipality are about 100 and almost all of them wear khadi.

Spinning During the War

A Mombasa correspondent sends the following extracts from *My Reminiscences of East Africa* by General Von Kettow-Vorbeck, showing the possibilities of spinning under stress:

> Notwithstanding the great amount of booty taken at Tanga, it was evident that, as the war seemed likely to be prolonged, the stocks in the Colony would become exhausted. The natives at New Moschi began all of a sudden to wear silk; this was by no means a sign of special extravagance; the stocks of cotton clothing in the Indian shops were simply

coming to an end. We had seriously to think of starting manufactures ourselves, in order to convert the abundant raw material into finished products. A curious existence now developed, reminding one of the industry of the Swiss family Robinson. Cotton fields existed in plenty. Popular books were hunted up, giving information about the forgotten arts of hand-spinning and weaving; white and black women took to spinning by hand; at the missions and in private workshops spinning-wheels and looms were built. In this manner, in a short time, the first useful piece of cotton cloth was produced. After various trials, the most suitable dye was obtained from the root of a tree called Ndaa, which imparted a brownish-yellow colour, very inconspicuous both in the grass and in the bush, and therefore, specially suitable for uniforms.

Would that we considered India to be in a state of war and refrained from using foreign cloth and even Indian mill-made cloth. All argument against the possibility of hand-spinning will then vanish like smoke. And are we not in a state worse than war when we have proof positive that millions of the inhabitants of India are living in semi-starvation?

"ALL FOR THEE"

A kind Tamil friend sends me for my day of silence quotations that do one's soul good to read. I do not give in *Young India* quotations except when there is an association about them and when they are relevant. In the collection the friend has sent me I find the following very appropriate verses from George Herbert:

Teach me, my God and King,
  In all things Thee to see,
And what I do in anything,
  To do it as for Thee.

A servant with this clause
  Makes drudgerie divine;
Who sweeps a room as for Thy laws,
  Makes that and the action fine.[1]

I give one more equally appropriate. It is from Ruskin:

When we build, let it be such a work as our descendants will thank us for; and let us think, as we lay stone on stone, that a time is to come when stones will be held sacred because our hands have touched them, and that men will say as they look upon them: See! this our fathers did for us.

[1] This is not, however, the first time Gandhiji had come across these lines. He commended them to Esther Faering in a letter on March 17, 1920. *Vide* Vol. XVII.

Public life would be much purer than it is if we would do everything in the name of the King of kings and not for self but for posterity.

Young India, 11-11-1926

16. A CORRECTION

It gives me great pleasure to be able to publish this correction.[1] The notes in question were prepared, as I have already stated, first by one co-worker and then recast by another. They had to be done in a hurry. Needless to say, none of the writers had the slightest intention of comparing the two institutions. The object was merely to show the steady reduction in khaddar prices. The correction made by Satis Babu is welcome and enforces the argument advanced by the writers who had to depend upon the figures they could then lay hands upon. I am glad too to be able to give the readers the corrected and increased sales of the Pratishthan.

Young India, 11-11-1926

17. LETTER TO DR. K. K. KURUVILLA

SABARMATI,
November 11, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. I do remember the correspondence with Dr. Faret. In my opinion, his course is clear. He must persist in picketing in spite of the notice. If he has the backing of public opinion, he will be able to do the picketing. If he has not, he will have to go to jail. And his imprisonment must ultimately bring success. But before taking the step, he should

[1] Not reproduced here. This came from Satis Chandra Das Gupta and pointed out in a letter of November 2, 1926, in the light of figures, the unfairness of the comparison of the Khadi Pratishthan with the Abhoy Ashram, made in the article "Charkha as the Only Cottage Industry" in *Young India*, 28-10-1926.

cultivate public opinion and make it clear to the Government that he has no intention of resorting to violent picketing.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

DR. K. K. KURUVILLA
MARTHOUSE SEMINARY
KOTTAYAM

From a microfilm: S.N. 19732

18. LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

November 12, 1926

DEAR SATIS BABU,

I feel your pangs from this long distance and, therefore, dread to write to you and still more to ask you to do anything outside your beat.

But the work I am asking you to do may be a little welcome diversion. Do go to Capt. Petaval's Institute in Bagbazar silently and see what it is. Is there anything in it? He is most insistent and wants me to advertise his movement. I have no faith in it or him.[1] Lest I may be doing him an injustice, I want you to guide me. You will see that now he has Dr. Ray with him.

You must come out of the Slough of Despond and be joyful even though everything may seemingly go wrong. You saw the liberty I took with your letter about the prices.[2]

How is Hemprabha Devi doing? She must write to me at least once a fortnight. Has malaria abated in your colony?

Can you attend on 23rd?

With love,

Yours,
BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 1563

[1] *Vide* "Letter to J. W. Petaval", 12-11-1926.
[2] *Vide* the footnote to "A Correction", 11-11-1926.

19. LETTER TO C. VIJAYARAGHAVACHARIAR

[*November 12, 1926*][1]

DEAR FRIEND,

Your welcome letter. I cannot plead guilty to the charge that I am partial to the North and indifferent to the South. I do not know that I shall have much to say about the Congress deliberations, even if I go there. I shall want to occupy the position I did in 1915-18, my work being confined to my special subjects. Somehow or other, the councils do not interest me. And what is going on makes me sad.

How are you keeping?

Yours sincerely,

C. VIJAYARAGHAVACHARIAR
ARAMA
SALEM

From a photostat: S.N. 19730

20. LETTER TO H. B. TEJUMAL

[*November 12, 1926*][2]

DEAR FRIEND,

To quote from scriptures will not help you. Draupadi's prayer is a celebrated instance. If one has faith in one's prayer, I have not a shadow of a doubt in my mind that it can move mountains. Faith and proof are contradictory acts. Hence illustrations are of little avail. The only thing is to pray whether one gets an answer to one's prayer or not. Prayer should never be directed to a selfish object.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. H. B. TEJUMAL
MEDICAL PRACTITIONER
NEW SUKKUR
SIND

From a photostat: S.N. 19731

[1] From the addressee's letter dated November 17, 1926 (S.N. 12083).
[2] Based on the S.N. register

21. LETTER TO J. W. PETAVAL

SABARMATI,
November 12, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

I am thankful for your persistence. Please continue. Some day I shall understand you and your scheme better. You are getting, on your spinning, enough help. Pray, therefore, let me watch your activity in silence. Some day I must visit your institution in person.

Yours sincerely,

CAPTAIN PETAVAL
POLYTECHNIC INSTITUTE
BAGBAZAR
CALCUTTA

From a microfilm: S.N. 19733

22. LETTER TO GIRI RAJ KISHORE

November 12, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. You may come. But I warn you again. I may simply give you a corner in my verandah for your abode. There may be no intellectual work for you at all and there may be all labour including, of course, sanitation work, water carrying, etc. You may be put on spinning or the like for eight hours per day.

You may be called upon to do your own cooking and, in no case, should your expense exceed Rs. 15 per month. Several here do it for less than Rs. 10.

If this attracts you, you will be happy here, not otherwise.

Yours sincerely,

GIRI RAJ KISHORE
ROHTAK

From a microfilm: S.N. 19734

23. LETTER TO MURLI PRASAD AMBARTHA

November 12, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

Khaddar is advocated not for the ruin of Manchester but for the uplift of the masses.

Mills can give employment only to a few lacs. Millions of people in partial unemployment must have an industry brought to them. The wheel is the only such industry. The question of cost cannot be allowed to affect an industry which is a vital need. Dear khaddar is therefore economically cheaper than cheap khaddar. It is possible to clothe India through khaddar in a year's time. It is impossible to do so through mills. The latter cannot do it under 20 years at least.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. MURLI PRASAD AMBARTHA
C/o B. GOKUL PRASAD
VAKIL
MORADPORE P.O.
PATNA

From a microfilm: S.N. 19735

24. LETTER TO IDA MILLER

November 12, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. M. Roniger will, I think, be translating *The Story of My Experiments with Truth.*

Yours sincerely,

FR. IDA MILLER
XIII BAUMGARTENSTRASSE, 53
VIENNA

From a photostat: S.N. 19736

25. LETTER TO MULCHAND AGRAWAL

Kartika Sud 7, 1983 [November 12, 1926]

BHAISHRI MULCHANDJI,

I have your letter. I have respect for traditional ceremonies but as place, time and circumstances change, so does the nature of traditions. I am neutral as regards the thread and other ceremonies.

I believe in *varnashrama* but these days both [*varna* and *ashrama*] seem to have vanished. We have all become Sudras. There were never five *varnas*.

The process of spinning is merely a *yajna* and open to all; but one who performs it for the sake of livelihood is a Vaisya. From the point of view of vocation it is a teacher, only if he works without wages is he a Brahmin.

Yours,

MOHANDAS GANDHI

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 764

26. LETTER TO BEHRAMJI KHAMBHATTA

Friday [November 12, 1926][1]

BHAISHRI KHAMBHATTA,

Chi. Devdas says that both of you wish to come and stay here with some of your friends but that you are feeling shy. There is no reason to feel so. Come without hesitation whenever you wish to. There will be some congestion, but I shall put you up somewhere. Your health, I hope, is excellent. We shall discuss Mr. Eddy's book when you come. I have already given some thought to it.

Blessings from

BAPU

BHAI BEHRAMJI KHAMBHATTA
275 HORNBY ROAD
FORT, BOMBAY

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6587

[1] The postmark bears the date 13-11-1926. Friday fell on November 12.

27. LETTER TO SRI PRAKASA

[*November 13, 1926*][1]

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. The dogs you refer to I do not regard as a nuisance though even in their case I would make their life less precarious than it is. But there are dogs in a city like Ahmedabad who are a danger to society, who are ill cared for and who are not wanted. If they cannot be cared for or otherwise kept as we would be kept, they should be killed rather than that they should be specimens of living death.

I hope to deal with the khaddar question in *Y.I.*

Yours sincerely

SRI PRAKASA
SEVASHRAMA
BENARES CANTONMENT

From a microfilm: S.N. 19729

28. LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT

Saturday [*November 13, 1926*][2]

CHI. VASUMATI,

I have your two letters. I have no worry if you keep well. I can bear your coming here sooner or later. I cannot bear it if your health breaks down. You must certainly be acquainted with Vikram, Indravadan's brother. He wishes to stay in the Ashram. What have you to say about this?

Devdas was here for a day and then he left for Panchgani.

Blessings from
BAPU

CHI. VASUMATI DHIMATRAM
C/o AMBALAL MATHURADAS
PALIAD-VEDA
P.O. DANGARVA

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 472. Courtesy: Vasumati Pandit; also S.N. 9220

[1] Based on the S.N. register
[2] From the postmark

29. LETTER TO TULSI MAHER

Saturday, Kartika Sud 8, 1983 [November 13, 1926]

CHI. TULSI MAHER,

I got your letters. I read some of them to the Ashramites. The dream was good. I cannot tell you more than what you heard in it. It would be enough if that much is accomplished. Hope your health is good. Are there cows and buffaloes in Nepal? The paper on which you have written is hand-made. Is it made there or is it imported? What is the price? Bhansali's forty days of fast will be over on Monday. His health is excellent.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 6528

30. IS THIS HUMANITY?-VI

[November 14, 1926]

A friend has sent a long letter containing a number of questions and raising a number of difficulties. He has also sent me his copies of *Navajivan* with profuse marginal notes on this series of articles. Some of his questions have been already answered in these pages. Without reproducing here the rest of his questions, I propose merely to give my answers.

I think I have been considering the whole question quite dispassionately. I do not think I could be accused of any partiality for *himsa* or for my own peculiar views in the matter. My partiality is all for truth which I seek to find out through ahimsa. It is my conviction that it cannot be found out in any other way. The question in dispute for me is not whether truth is our goal or not, nor whether ahimsa is or is not the only way to it. There is no possibility of my ever doubting these fundamental principles. The question before me is about the practice of these principles. Every day I see fresh aspects opening out to me. There is every possibility of my making mistakes in the practice of ahimsa and, though I am taking every precaution possible to avoid them, it is possible that I may err occasionally. Let not friends, therefore, impute partiality to me when I cannot agree with them. Let

them believe me to be unconsciously in error and bear with me. I now proceed to give the answers.

1. The question to solve is not what is hydrophobia and how to treat it.

2. The municipality or the Government will find a remedy not in accordance with ahimsa but with what they conceive to be public interest. The Mahajan can find the right remedy if they are truly non-violent. Government will never subscribe to the absolute principle of non-destruction of animals (dogs in the present case). Municipalities have members belonging to different faiths and different communities. They cannot, therefore, be expected to insist on a non-violent remedy.

3. The duty of finding a non-violent remedy is the Mahajan's. It is a mistake to think that the Mahajan is blameless or helpless.

4. For the purpose of the discussion, I make no distinction between a rabid dog and a man who has run amuck and is in the act of dealing death. Habitual violence is a disease. The habitually violent man goes on in his murderous career only because he is beside himself. Both a rabid dog and a rabid man are worthy of pity. When they are found in the act of injuring others, and when there is no other remedy than to take their life, it becomes a duty to do so to arrest their activity. The duty is all the greater in case of a votary of ahimsa.

5. I have never meant that everyone should own a dog. What I have said is that the dogs should in no case be ownerless. Not that the owned dogs will be immune, but the owners will be responsible for them if they are diseased or get rabies.

6. The ownerless stray dogs are not innocent as lambs. They were never so. Owned dogs are generally so. The purpose of the present controversy is to make all the dogs innocuous.

7. I have never suggested that roving dogs should be killed wherever found. I have suggested enabling legislation in the interest of the dogs themselves. That will make humanly inclined people alive to their sense of duty and they will then either own dogs or find out some other remedy and thus make the existence of stray dogs impossible. In refusing alms to the beggar, the purpose is not to starve him, but to teach him self-help, to make him a man. The duty of killing dogs arises in the circumstances and to the extent I have indicated in the previous articles. To say that it is a sin to extirpate dogs is not to contradict me. For I have never expressed a contrary opinion.

8. It is idle to discuss whether Mr. Ambalal's conduct was or was not proper, or whether my opinion about it was or was

not correct. The public is not in full possession of the details of the incident. The broader question of ahimsa is the main issue, and to bring in Mr. Ambalal in the discussion is to cloud the issue.

9. The issue is: Whether, in consonance with the principle of ahimsa, it may be a duty to kill certain dogs under certain circumstances when no other alternative is possible. I submit that it may be and I hold that there cannot be two opinions in the matter. There may be a difference as to whether particular circumstances justify the act. The consolation for a votary of ahimsa lies in the fact that, from his standpoint, such circumstances can only be rare.

10. But I can see one difference of opinion that must for the time being remain. In the letter under consideration as also in many others, I see that there is an instinctive horror of killing living beings under any circumstances whatsoever. For instance, an alternative has been suggested in the shape of confining even rabid dogs in a certain place and allowing them to die a slow death. Now, my idea of compassion makes this thing impossible for me. I cannot for a moment bear to see a dog, or for that matter any other living being, helplessly suffering the torture of a slow death. I do not kill a human being thus circumstanced because I have more hopeful remedies. I should kill a dog similarly situated, because in its case I am without a remedy. Should my child be attacked by rabies and there was no hopeful remedy to relieve his agony, I should consider it my duty to take his life. Fatalism has its limits. We leave things to Fate after exhausting all the remedies. One of the remedies, and the final one to relieve the agony of a tortured child, is to take his life.

But I shall not labour this point. What to my mind is impotence of the votaries of ahimsa is an obstacle to a true understanding of this dharma. I hope therefore that those who differ from me will for the present bear with me.

So much about the thoughtful letter of a friend. I shall now deal with an angry letter. The letter says:

> You have been so much under the Western influence that you have learnt to think it proper to kill lower beings for the sake of man. It is better for you to confess your error and apologize to the world. You should have made up your mind in this matter after exhaustless [*sic*] sifting. Instead, you have passionately taken sides and discredited yourself.

This is the least offensive sentence I have picked up from letters of this type. I submit I have not formed my opinion without much deliberation. It is not an opinion I have recently

formed. Neither is it hasty. One should not let one's so-called greatness come in the way of the formation of opinion, otherwise one cannot arrive at truth.

I do not think that everything Western is to be rejected. I have condemned the Western civilization in no measured terms. I still do so, but it does not mean that everything Western should be rejected. I have learnt a great deal from the West and I am grateful to it. I should think myself unfortunate if contact with and the literature of the West had no influence on me. But I do not think I owe my opinion about the dogs to my Western education or Western influence. The West (with the exception of a small school of thought) thinks that it is no sin to kill the lower animals for what it regards to be the benefit of man. It has, therefore, encouraged vivisection. The West does not think it wrong to commit violence of all kinds for the satisfaction of the palate. I do not subscribe to these views. According to the Western standard, it is no sin, on the contrary it is a merit, to kill animals that are no longer useful. Whereas I recognize limits at every step. I regard even the destruction of vegetable life as *himsa*. It is not the teaching of the West.

Argumentum ad hominem has no place in a discussion of principles and their practice. My opinions should be considered as they are, irrespective of whether they are derived from the West or the East. Whether they are based on truth or untruth, *himsa* or ahimsa, is the only thing to be considered. I firmly believe that they are based on truth and ahimsa.

Young India, 18-11-1926

31. *VAUTHA FAIR*

Fairs are held all over our country. At some place or other annual fairs are held. All sorts of people come to these fairs from nearby places. For the big fairs people come from every part of India.

Such a fair is held every *Kartiki Purnima* at Vautha in Dholka taluka. On behalf of the District Congress Committee, Shri Dahyabhai has been rendering service there, with the help of a small band of volunteers, for the last several years. This year, too, he has published an appeal for volunteers. Last year and the year before I had intended to attend this fair but could not. This year, too, to my great regret, I am not able to go. But

I recommend that those who wish to do social service should go there. Even in the fairs organized for religious purposes, evil practices have grown rampant. Cheats go to such fairs and deceive simple people. Many kinds of immorality are practised there and gambling and other vices encouraged. Volunteers can definitely effect some reform by going there. I hope that those who can spare some days will go there and render all possible services.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 14-11-1926

32. LETTER TO GERTRUDE GROGAN

November 14, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

I like your earnest letter.[1] When, if ever, God wants me to go to America, He will open the way for me and guide my steps.

Yours sincerely,

MISS GERTRUDE GROGAN
BARNARD COLLEGE
NEW YORK

From a photostat: S.N. 19737

33. LETTER TO RAMESHWARDAS PODDAR

Kartika Shukla 9, 1983 [*November 14, 1926*]

BHAI RAMESHWARJI,

We have no other way but Ramanama. Chant Ramanama and never be disheartened.

Yours,
MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 188

[1] On October 15, 1926, the correspondent had written of America's need of spiritual guidance and added: "It takes a man of your great insight to furnish it. For the sake of those in America who feel a need for you, come, oh Mahatma, and you will be assured of a sincere welcome" (S.N. 10830).

34. LETTER TO FEROZE

November 15, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

Your letter. There is no royal road to the control of passions. Constant endeavour and constant waiting upon God are the two things needed.

Yours sincerely,

FEROZE
V. CHAKWANO
P.O. PHALIA
(GUJRAT DISTRICT)
PUNJAB

From a microfilm: S.N. 19738

35. LETTER TO FELIX VALYE

November 15, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

Mr. Pickthall[1] asks me for an article or a message for your magazine. I have not a moment to spare for writing an article. What message shall I send you save to say that my nationalism is intense internationalism? I am sick of the strife between nations or religions.

Yours sincerely,

DR. FELIX VALYE
HOTEL RICHMOND
GENEVA

From a photostat: S.N. 19739

[1] Marmaduke Pickthall, sometime editor of *The Bombay Chronicle*

36. LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

Monday [November 15, 1926][1]

CHI. JAMNALAL,

I get your letters regularly. Kamala is well and happy now.

There is no need to come specially to attend the meeting of the Charkha Sangh. I hope you are having rest there. If you are not, you should run away to some other place.

Read the wires. I found all the replies satisfactory.

Bhansali's fast of forty days will end today. He will break his fast tomorrow morning. His strength has been very well maintained. He has not taken any service from anyone.

I hope to start from here on the 2nd December.[2] Who will accompany me has not yet been decided.

Devdas has gone to Panchgani because of Mathuradas. Pyarelal had to go to the Punjab because of his sister.

It was necessary for Soniramji to undergo an operation and his mother and others were not willing to have the operation done anywhere except in Rangoon.

Champabehn is here. She has not been entrusted with any responsibilities.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2877

37. LETTER TO LALAN PANDIT

THE ASHRAM,
November 15, 1926

BHAISHRI LALAN,

I am not aware of any violence in my language. Calling a hypocrite a hypocrite is no violence but perhaps there is violence in not calling him so. What would we call a serpent? If my son is worthless and if I describe him using good epithets, I would be

[1] From the reference in the letter to Bhansali's fast, it is clear that it was written on the Monday following November 13, 1926; *vide* "Letter to Tulsi Maher", 13-11-1926.

[2] To go to Wardha; Gandhiji reached there on December 4.

guilty of untruth, and in my humble opinion untruth in any form is violence. In calling a worthless person worthless there is no violence, but unedifying behaviour on our part towards him is violence. I do not read the *Bombay Samachar*.

Vandemataram from
MOHANDAS

BHAI LALAN PANDIT
C/O SHETH CHHOTALAL MALUKCHAND
HATHIBHAINI BAHARNI VADI
AHMEDABAD

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: S.N. 19962

38. LETTER TO DEVCHAND PAREKH

[*November 15, 1926*][1]

BHAISHRI DEVCHAND,

It is good that Bhai Fulchand[2] took pity on you. But I can't afford to do so. Who can do the copying for me? Therefore you have to read my handwriting.

I received your letter only today, therefore I have sent a telegram to Porbandar saying that the March dates would suit me.

We cannot drag Malaviyaji [to the conference][3]. Besides, what will he speak in the Khaddar Conference?[4] I prefer Jaisukhlal Mehta or Vallabhbhai Patel. It is worthwhile if men are drawn through interest in work. What can they do if they come only because of big names.

These are my personal views only. What you all decide is to be accepted as the right thing.

I shall definitely start from here on the 2nd December.

When I shall return is in God's hand. It should not be surprising if I return only at the time of the Conference. So take from me in the current month whatever work you wish me to do.

[1] From the postmark

[2] Fulchand Kasturchand Shah

[3] For holding the session of the Kathiawar Political Conference

[4] This was to be held along with the Kathiawar Political Conference at the same place; *vide* Vol. XXXI, p. 532.

Tell Bhai Fulchand that his letter will be discussed when he comes here.

BAPU

[PS.]

I am returning the letter in English.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5721

39. TELEGRAM TO MADHOJEE, MANDAL MANTRI, NIMKHAR[1]

[On or after *November 15, 1926*]

I MUST NOT INTERFERE.

GANDHI

From the original: C.W. 4964 b. Courtesy: Parasram Mehrotra

40. INTRODUCTION TO "HAND-SPINNING AND HAND-WEAVING"

SABARMATI,
November 16, 1926

It will be remembered that early last year Sjt. Revashanker Jagjivan Mehta, the Joint Treasurer of the National Congress, announced a prize of Rs. 1,000 for the best essay on spinning. The judges appointed were Sjts. Ambalal Sarabhai, Shankerlal Banker, Maganlal Gandhi and myself. Sixty other essays were received. After much deliberation, the judges decided to distribute the prize between Professor S. V. Puntambekar, at present of the Benares Hindu University, and Sjt. N. S. Varadachari. The essay that is now being presented to the public is the result of the joint effort of these two winners who were requested to amalgamate their essays and give a joint production. It is difficult to say how far the effort is an improvement upon the originals. But workers in the vast field of hand-spinning will find ample material in the following pages to strengthen their position and I should be much surprised if the sceptic does not find enough food for reflection.

The authors have applied themselves to an examination principally of the following propositions:

[1] This was sent in reply to a telegram dated November 15 reading: "Kindly wire whom you prefer Birla or Sriprakasa. Congress work suffering."

Are there millions in India who require a supplementary occupation, the majority being idle for want of it during at least four months in the year? Is hand-spinning the only supplementary occupation and, if it is, can it be easily taken up by the people? Is it possible to sell khaddar woven from hand-spun yarn among the people in the teeth of the competition offered by foreign and Indian mills?

The readers will find that the authors have endeavoured to give an affirmative answer to all these important questions. Is it not the duty of everyone who wants to see an amelioration in the condition of India's masses carefully to read what the authors have stated and to support the khaddar movement if they accept their conclusions? Let them denounce it as a waste of effort, if they can dare controvert the facts adduced by the authors.

M. K. GANDHI

Hand-spinning and Hand-weaving

41. LETTER TO N. S. VARADACHARI

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
November 16, 1926

MY DEAR VARADACHARI,

Here is the preface[1]. It should be quite in time. If you have to suggest any improvement, do not hesitate to make the suggestion. You may write your own preface and call it foreword or call this foreword and call yours a preface if you like writing one. You will see that the essay is free from error.

Yours sincerely,

From a copy: S.N. 11246

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

42. LETTER TO KANAK CHANDRA SHARMA[1]

[*November 16, 1926*]

I have your letter and the piece of khaddar.

KANAK CHANDRA SHARMA
[SECRETARY AND ACCOUNTANT
A. I. S. A.
NAVGONG
ASSAM]

From a microfilm: S.N. 11247

43. LETTER TO BRIJKRISHNA CHANDIWALA

Kartika Sud 11 [*November 16, 1926*][2]

BHAI BRIJKRISHNA,

It was only due to lack of time that I could not reply to your letter earlier. Do come when you feel like coming and go whenever you wish. I want to offer you whatever consolation I can.

Devdas came here and went off to Panchgani.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2351

44. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

Kartika Sud 11 [*November 16, 1926*][3]

BHAISHRI MUNNALAL,

I have your letter. One who tries to observe *brahmacharya*, truth, non-violence, non-thieving and non-possession, who believes that untouchability is sinful, who labours without feeling any fatigue, who thinks it is his dharma to clean latrines, who controls

[1] The reply is scribbled on an undated letter reporting the position of khaddar production work in Navgong district and making suggestions for improved cotton cultivation.

[2] Devdas went to Panchgani in 1926. *Kartika Sud* 11 fell on November 16.

[3] The postmark bears the date 18-11-1926. *Kartika Sud* 11, however, fell on November 16.

the palate and spins and cards daily and wears pure khadi, only such a person may stay in the Ashram.

Vandemataram from
MOHANDAS

SHRI MUNNALAL GANGADAS SHAH
BURHANPUR

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: S.N. 19964

45. *FLOWERS FROM THE POET'S GARDEN*

Mrs. Blair—daughter of the late W. C. Bonnerjee—sends me the following translation made specially for her by Mrs. Pramatha Chaudhuri, the Poet's niece. Mrs. Blair says:

> She wrote them out for me in Bengali as I wanted a helpful saying for everyday reference such as one can get in English. She selected these quotations from addresses given by the Poet from time to time at Santiniketan. The addresses were written down at the time the Poet gave them, but I do not think they have been printed. I liked the quotations so much that I got them put into English.

I am sure the readers of *Young India* will like to treasure these flowers from the Poet's garden.

> The centi-petalled lotus of Love, depending on the stalk of Self, gradually unfolds itself petal by petal from the self to the family, from the family to society, from society to one's country, from one's country to humanity, from humanity to the Universal Spirit, from the Universal Spirit to the Supreme Spirit, thereby accomplishing its process of evolution.
>
> He whose intellect cannot perceive law and order in the working of the universe is incapable, ineffectual and defeated in every department of life.
>
> They who succeed in the field of material power do so by aggrandizing themselves, whereas they who succeed in the spiritual sphere do so by sacrificing themselves.
>
> Because when a man attempts to see the whole thing at once he sees it indistinctly, therefore he first breaks it up into parts, and then fits them all into a whole.
>
> In proportion as India lost mastery over Nature by giving overemphasis to the spiritual side, so she is now required to pay the penalty for it.
>
> The work that we do from necessity or want, that work is our bondage; but the work that we do out of joy is not bondage; that work is freedom.

We realize perfect joy in proportion as we are able to harmonize knowledge, love and work in ourselves.

He who desires to be master of the house must be stricter than all others in obeying the discipline and rules of the house.

When the mind is not prepared to receive ideas, then words do not reveal their full meaning to the irreverent listener.

Life's mission is a very difficult one, its field is very large, its laws are very difficult to understand, its activities are very various, its sacrifices are very hard to make.

The lamp cannot conceal its own light within itself.

As stagnant water is ever afraid of being polluted by dirt, so today captive India, through fear of pollution, continually raises forbidding walls in order to cut herself off from all connection with the outer and larger world, and keeps even sun and air at a distance.

It is only when we daily draw purity from the source of our character, that words and ideas come to our help.

Man has built up his life on three great planes, the material, the religious, and the spiritual.

We give the name of desire to that external force which attracts our efforts to things outside us.

As external things are the aim of desire, so are inward motives the aim of will.

In all this vast Universe, and throughout this great life of humanity, it is impossible that we should not acknowledge Him at all anywhere.

When the ties of desire are severed, then earth, sky and water, living creatures and inanimate objects, beasts and men,—all become filled with bliss, and there is no limit to joy.

That I have come and stood in the midst of this vast universe is a most wonderful event, there is nothing more momentous than it.

There is joy even in the endeavour after realization, let alone the state of fulfilment.

To what an incalculable extent do we waste our strength throughout the day in futile talk and in futile deeds?

It is only when we want to turn towards God that we are able to realize how strong is the attraction of this godless life that we have built up for ourselves.

As the final aim of every tree is to bring forth fruit, so the final aim of this world-tree is to bring forth the perfect man.

Dwelling in the midst of this world, God only gives of Himself; He takes nothing. And when our soul can partake of this nature of God, then will it attain Truth.

Young India, 18-11-1926

46. SPINNING AS DEATHBED CONSOLATION

Two versions have been published in *Young India* of the story in which the brave Buddhist wife asks her dying husband to dismiss all anxious worldly thoughts out of his mind and to die a peaceful death as she knows how to spin and will maintain the children as well as herself by that means, one in 1921 and the other during the current year. But they were either inaccurate or incomplete.. Having since looked up the Pali original, I translate below the first, and part of the second paragraph in Section XVI, *Chakkampata* (*Saraniya–Vagga*) of the *Anguttara–Nikaya*, a canonical work of the Buddhists:

"The householder Nakulapita was dangerously ill and very much worried. Then Nakulamata, his wife, addressing him, said, 'You should not now give yourself to anxious thought even for a moment. It is very painful that a person should die with anxious thoughts weighing upon his mind, and the Lord Buddha has censured such a kind of death. Perhaps you are afraid that when you are no longer with us, I shall not be able to feed the children and maintain the household. But your fears are groundless, as I am skilful in spinning cotton and in dressing hair (This second expression is not quite clear to me. I wish some Pali scholar throws more light upon it. V. G. D.) and will, therefore, have no difficulty whatever in providing for children as well as myself when you are away. Therefore please dismiss all disturbing thoughts out of your mind.

" 'Again perhaps you apprehend that when you are no more I might contract a second marriage. But you must drive away any·such·fear, seeing that we have for the last sixteen years lived a life of chastity though married, and maintaining a household. Please let your mind be at perfect peace.' "

V. G. D.

From this note I have removed the original text as I hardly think the readers of *Young India* want the original texts, Sanskrit or other. But I must not omit the following remark that V.G.D. made under the texts removed.

It is a great pity that all Pali texts are published in the Latin script although Fausboll of Copenhagen, the Danish editor of the *Jataka*, haughtily observes:

"I have continued to transliterate the Oriental into Latin characters and shall continue to do so in all I publish of Pali, for it is my conviction that the fine Latin characters must not only henceforward be applied to languages which have no literature and to literatures which have hitherto not been published, but also that they one day will super-

sede all other characters when Europeo-American civilization has, like a lava, laid itself over all other civilizations and made them into Herculaneums and Pompeiis." I wonder how the Buddhist patrons of the Pali Text Society enjoy the fine prospect pictured in the above.

Young India, 18-11-1926

47. THE ARTS OF KINGS AND QUEENS

A correspondent who has personal experience of the service that the spinning-wheel is rendering sends me the following from Ruskin's *Sesame and Lilies*:[1]

> Begin with the first—the lord of them all—agriculture. . . .
>
> Then, after agriculture, the art of kings, take the next head of human arts—weaving, the art of queens, honoured of all noble Heathen women, in the person of their virgin goddess—honoured of all Hebrew women, by the word of their priest king—'She layeth her hands to the spindle, and her hands hold the distaff; she stretcheth out her hand to the poor. She is not afraid of the snow for her household, for all her household are clothed with scarlet. She maketh herself covering of tapestry; her clothing is silk and purple. She maketh fine linen and selleth it, and delivereth girdles to the merchant.' What have we done in all these thousands of years with this bright art of Greek maid and Christian matron? Six thousand years of weaving and have we learnt to weave? Might not every naked wall have been purple with tapestry, and *every feeble breast fenced with sweet colours from the cold*? What have we done? *Our fingers are too few, it seems, to twist together some poor covering for our bodies.* We set our streams to work for us, and choke the air with fire, *to turn our spinning-wheels*—and are we clothed yet? Are not the streets of the capitals of Europe foul with the sale of cast clouts and rotten rags? Is not the beauty of your sweet children left in wretchedness of disgrace, while with better honour, nature clothes the brood of the bird in its nest, and the suckling of the wolf in her den? And does not every winter's snow robe what you have not robed, and shroud what you have not shrouded; and every winter's wind bear up to heaven its wasted souls, to witness against you hereafter, by the voice of their Christ: 'I was naked, and you clothed me not?'

and remarks

> Scathing indictment indeed, but how fervently he pleads for the spinning-wheel. If he could say this of an admittedly rich country like

[1] Only excerpts are reproduced here.

Europe, how much more should it be true of a country like India, proved beyond question to be poorer?

Young India, 18-11-1926

48. SOUTH AFRICAN SITUATION

Here are extracts from a letter from Mr. Andrews after his arrival in Durban:

> It is good to get here again, and though it has been a difficult time on the voyage, I am so thankful that I came on and did not delay longer. There are any amount of things here to be settled and other things to put straight before the delegation arrives, and it will take every moment of my time to get through.
>
> Today I have had the warmest possible welcome and Rawat's Bioscope was crowded this evening at the 'welcome'. I am staying with Sorabji at 19, 1st Avenue. The house at 110, Field Street, is all pulled down and the site sold to Europeans!
>
> The days have been crowded to the full and it is almost impossible to avoid it as I had expected. There was a very serious smallpox outbreak in the Indian quarters and every single smallpox case was that of an Indian. The mortality was as high as 25% and it was of a very virulent type. There were vicious letters in the Press abusing Indians for insanitary habits, etc. The one thing to do was what you did in Johannesburg and after getting vaccinated myself (without which I could have done nothing at all), I got the Medical Officer to let me visit the Indians who were kept in quarantine daily, and did everything I could to pacify them. Also we met and formed an Indian Health Committee and decided to work under the doctor's orders and he has already set us to work. At once, as soon as this was announced the whole tone of the Press changed and we have been praised where before we were being blamed. Altogether it is going to work out for the best.
>
> I have had time now to consider things fully and get hold of the situation. There is no doubt that if we can get the best public opinion on our side in the next few weeks, we shall get a good Press and materially help the Conference by creating a favourable atmosphere beforehand. It has been rather difficult to persuade them not to have a big demonstration just at the time of the Conference, thinking it would 'impress' them. I have been explaining to them that some good solid work [like] clearing out the dirt from insanitary quarters would 'impress' far more than all the demonstrations and speeches in the world.

At the same time, the last thing I should wish is that things should go to the other extreme and get slack and lazy and indifferent. What is nee d is to direct the excitement and energy into a right channel. I have consulted the best Europeans who are sympathetic and they all say that the hartal and Day of Prayer which we held about a year ago was extraordinarily impressive in the right sense of the word and no one felt it to be provocative. They felt that Indians were doing the right thing in their own way and doing it well.

The reference to the sale of the property in Field Street revives oldest memories. It was one of the oldest properties of which a long lease was purchased by the late Haji Aboobakr Amod,—one of the earliest Indian merchants to settle in South Africa. The property was sublet to the late Parsi Rustomjee who had possession of it till his death. It was more a public place than a private store—most informal Indian gatherings were held there. It was the place where the most important decisions were taken. It was there that Gokhale used to pass much of his day time. It was there that Andrews worked. It sheltered the rich and the poor. It had become a real dharmsala. On the expiry of the lease the Durban Town Council refused to renew the lease and advertised the property for sale subject to the prohibition of Indian bids. The Durban Town Council knew the (to the Indians) sacred character of the place, but the knowledge could not save the property from passing into European hands. Hence the reference to it by Mr. Andrews and the note of exclamation.

His presence there at this juncture is indeed a godsend. The unfortunate outbreak of smallpox might easily have created a panic both among Europeans and Indians. The former might have taken dangerously drastic measures and the latter might have become paralysed with fear. The prompt measures taken by Mr. Andrews averted what might have developed into a calamity.

That godly man's presence is likely to turn the scales in favour of the settlers. And though not much may be expected of the Conference, he is certainly creating the proper atmosphere for a calm and just consideration of the intricate problem.

Sir Mahomed Habibulla's deputation has a heavy responsibility on its shoulders. It has the solid backing of unanimous public opinion. Let us hope for the best.

Young India, 18-11-1926

49. SPINNING IN MUNICIPALITIES

It is only by accident that I get information about spinning in the schools under Municipalities and Local and District Boards. If the chairmen or secretaries of Municipalities and Local and District Boards who are in the habit of seeing *Young India* will kindly send the information about the introduction and progress of spinning in those schools, it will be possible to get accurate statistics about the output of yarn in such schools and the number of boys and girls spinning.

Young India, 18-11-1926

50. CONDITIONS OF PACIFIC STRIKES

A friend sends me an extract from *No More War*, an organ of the British Pacifists. I copy from the extract the following conditions Mr. A. Fenner Brockway lays down as a test of a pacific strike:

1. A strike in protest of social evils which destroy human life can be as much an act of pacifism as a strike against war. (Starvation wages kill as many human beings as are killed by guns.)

2. If it be said that "constitutional" means could be used to end these evils, the same can be said of war. Our "constitutional" machinery is inadequate. The voters two years ago had neither wage reductions nor war in mind.

3. If it be said that a strike (and particularly a general strike) against wage reductions is an effort to "coerce" the nation or the Government, the same can be said about a general strike against war. As a matter of fact, neither has any promise of success unless the greater part of the nation supports it.

4. It is not accurate to liken a strike to an economic blockade. So far as there is danger of hunger, it would be the strikers themselves who would suffer first. In actual fact, in the recent General Strike, the T.U.C. (Trade Union Congress) was prepared to co-operate in maintaining life and health. The Government refused co-operation.

5. *The determining factor as to whether a strike is pacifist or not* is the spirit from which it springs. A strike against war in which the motive was hatred of members of the Government rather than of war and which represented a spirit which might be transformed into civil war, would not be

an act of pacifism, nor would a strike against wage reductions animated by hatred of the employers or of members of the Government, or by anti-social feeling. But both are acts of pacifism when inspired by the spirit of protest against the evils themselves.

6. Whilst it is admitted that a non-pacifist spirit occasionally showed itself in the utterances, and still more rarely in the acts of strikers, I have not the least hesitation in saying that the dominant motive in the Great Strike was that of self-sacrificing moral protest and not anti-social force or personal hatred. It was this which gave it spiritual power; in this the secret of the wonderful self-discipline of the men was to be found.

A pacifism which can only see the cruelties of occasional military warfare and is blind to the continuous cruelties of our social system is worthless. Unless our pacifism finds expression in the broad human movement which is seeking not merely the end of war, but our equally non-pacifist civilization as a whole, it will be of little account in the onward march of mankind. The spirit of life will sweep on, quite uninfluenced by it.

The No More War Movement will fulfil its purpose just in so far as it recognizes this.

I would only add to these admirable conditions one more test. A pacific strike must be limited to those who are labouring under the grievance to be redressed. Thus if the match manufacturers, say, of Timbuctoo, who are quite satisfied with their lot, strike out of sympathy for its millhands who are getting starvation wages, the match manufacturers' strike would be a species of violence. They may and should help in a most effective manner by withdrawing their custom from the millowners of Timbuctoo without laying themselves open to the charge of violence. But it is possible to conceive occasions when those who are not directly suffering may be under an obligation to cease work. Thus if, in the instance imagined, the masters in the match factory combine with the millowners of Timbuctoo, it will clearly be the duty of the workers in the match factory to make common cause with the mill-hands. But I have suggested the addition purely by way of illustration. In the last resort, every case has to be judged on its own merits. Violence is a subtle force. It is not easy always to detect its presence though you may feel it all the same.

Young India, 18-11-1926

51. *NOTES*

Ramachandran Lift

Numerous letters have been received both by Mr. Ramachandran and me regarding the Ramachandran Animal Power Lift. Some ask to be supplied with the lift at once, others ask pertinent questions about it. Mr. Ramachandran has left all the letters with me. The lift is patented. The inventor has no lift ready to supply. He has to get it manufactured. He has not the means to attend to many orders with despatch. I am, therefore, trying to secure facilities for rapid manufacture. The inventor has proceeded to Madras to attend to his affairs and prepare to give his whole time to the supervision of manufacture and putting up the lift. I, therefore, urge the correspondents to be a little patient and await the necessary arrangements that must be made before a supply can be commenced. An endeavour is being made to nationalize the manufacture and to secure the lowest possible quotations for the lift.

Correspondents will forgive me for not replying individually to their letters. I deal below with some of the points raised by them:

1. If the arrangements that are pending go through, I hope to publish a diagram with the letterpress.

2. The parts are not at all complicated; on the contrary, the plan is incredibly simple. It is undoubtedly designed to answer village requirements.

3. Small lengths of rails, pulleys and wire ropes have to be supplied from cities.

4. The lift should last several years. The bucket and the rope may require more frequent replacement.

5. So far as I can see, an ordinary village blacksmith should be able to attend to such repairs as may become necessary.

6. The lift must be fixed by a skilled mechanic. The weights, the incline, etc., have to be adjusted. The rails must be truly laid. The pulley must be in its proper position. But I understand that a man with ordinary intelligence can be easily and quickly trained to fix the lift with its appurtenances. The mechanic will have to be paid his travelling expenses, etc. These details are now being attended to.

7. The most economical way is to use a heavy male buffalo, the heavier the animal, the larger the quantity of water it will carry without any exertion.

8. The empty trolley is carried up by the weight of the bucket.

9. The bucket is as a rule 40 lbs. in weight, the trolley 100 lbs.

10. The lift can be employed for any depth, even 125 ft., i.e., it is capable of being used wherever the ordinary *mhote* can be.

KHADI SALES

During the period of probation the problem of the sale of khadi is as great as, if not greater than, that of production. Hitherto, the sales have not kept pace with production. The best-managed province for sales is undoubtedly Bengal. The tone set by the Khadi Pratishthan,—the creation of Dr. Ray and his lieutenant Satis Chandra Das Gupta—has been kept up by the organizations that have grown up there. Bengal has also striven with considerable success to manufacture according to local needs. This is sound economy. The method has enabled the workers to come and keep in touch with the buying middle class at the one end and the manufacturing poor class at the other. The consequence is a steady improvement in texture, variety and pattern and in prices from the buyer's point of view. The remarkable fact about the growing cheapness of khadi is that generally the reduction in prices has not meant a corresponding reduction in wages of carders, spinners and weavers, but has been due to better knowledge and greater efficiency.

The latest instance of organized sales comes from Sylhet. Sjt. Dhirendranath Das Gupta has been managing only a small khadi centre at Kulaura near Sylhet. He reports that he sold during the Puja holidays only over Rs. 2,600 worth of khadi.

Though there is no doubt that in the other provinces, too, considerable improvement has been made as in Bengal, the sales have not been so methodically organized as there. Bihar is trying to come very near Bengal. But the workers all over the provinces should devise methods of stimulating sales. The experiences of Mr. Bharucha and other veterans should be pooled and schemes with variations suiting the various provinces should be devised and put into operation. Hawking and peripatetic exhibitions have come to stay. There is danger of all these schemes being top-heavy if the minutest details are not worked out. There are some stores in the different parts of India which from this standpoint should perhaps be closed. A store costing Rs. 500 per year and selling

no more is one that is fit to be closed. There is gross mismanagement or ignorance about it.

The True Spirit

A correspondent writes:[1]

For me this correspondent is a member, in spirit, of both the organizations. Technically he will become a member by producing the yarn of his own spinning before a deputy of A.I.S.A. in his district, and sending the equivalent price of the yarn. For some, even to send that amount is not possible. They can then remain members in spirit and enroll themselves as volunteers sending a report of their work from time to time and holding themselves ready to do any service that may be required of them and that they may be capable of rendering.

Temperance Reform

For some time past some Christians of Travancore have been earnestly striving to put down the drink habit by working from within, i.e., by seeing and speaking to the people given to the habit. They are trying to organize picketing with the intention of warning the visitors to the liquor dens. The simple procedure seems to have frightened the Travancore authorities. The District Magistrate at Kottayam has served a gagging notice upon Dr. Z. M. Paret who is a well-known Christian in Travancore and, so far as I know, whose non-violent spirit has never been questioned. This is the notice:

> Whereas it has been made to appear to me from reports received from the District Superintendent of Police, Kottayam, that you are making speeches inciting people to do picketing before liquor shops and to commit other form of lawlessness and that speeches are likely to cause breaches of the peace and bring the authority of Government into contempt, I do hereby strictly order and enjoin you under Section 26 of the Regulation IV of 1905 not to make any speech, harangue or address from this day in any part of this District of Kottayam.

The notice begs the question by describing every speech advising picketing as an incitement. What the "other form of lawlessness" there can be is not made clear in the order. Thus in Travancore if the Magistrate's order correctly interprets its law, a premium is put upon the vice of drunkenness. Not only does a State provide facilities for drink but it also prevents reformers from resorting to

[1] The letter is not reproduced here; it stated the writer's difficulty, in view of his financial position, to pay subscriptions to the A.I.S.A. and the All-India Cow-Protection Association, despite being a spinner and weaver.

the only effective and peaceful method of directly approaching the drunkards and appealing to them not to give way to temptation. I hope that the law of Travancore is faultless and that the District Magistrate has erred in his interpretation. The interpretation should be tested in a higher court. In any case, the reformers' duty is clear. If the law is at fault they must move for its repeal. And if all effort to set it right fails, their peaceful picketing must go on even at the risk of being imprisoned, taking care to avoid enlisting as volunteers persons who cannot restrain themselves under provocation. It is worthy of note that the gag is perpetual.

IS IT HYPER-SUSPICION?

> My fears at the very outset that the Agricultural Commission is merely a British commercial enterprise for selling agricultural implements is being confirmed by reports of meetings held in England.

This is an extract from a letter of a correspondent who weighs every word he writes, has no malice in him, and is at present not much interested in politics. I have reproduced the extract because I have shared the fear myself. It is possible that the fear is an echo of my own distrust and that the Commission is a well-meant effort to probe the bottom of the agricultural condition of the people of India. I would be delighted to discover that my fear or suspicion was wholly unjustified. But whilst it lasts and is shared by others, it is much better to express it than to harbour it secretly.

Only the other day, I reproduced an extract from a letter received from another correspondent who was a visitor to the Exhibition. He had gone with a bias in favour of the Exhibition. But he could not help giving an involuntary expression to his feeling that "the centre of attraction in the Exhibition was agricultural implements and machinery which the peasantry would never use." Indeed, he went further and said, "Some of the machinery was fit only for the scrap heap." He knew what he was talking about, having handled machinery on a fairly large scale. He thought that many things were allowed to be exhibited which had not been tested and guaranteed. An exhibition to be instructive and profitable should contain nothing that is not tested. Simple credulous people going there finding in flaring headlines preposterous claims on behalf of machines would naturally buy them and on finding them to be useless rue the day when they purchased them. The wise and just thing, however, is to suspend one's judgment and to keep an open mind till the report of the Commission is out.

WIDOWS AND WIDOWERS

A correspondent writes:

> I have carefully read the correspondence "A Catechism" and your replies published in the *Young India* dated 14th October '26.[1] While answering the first question of the correspondent on page 357 in para first in the concluding portion, you say, "I should any day subscribe to a reform in the Hindu Law making sinful the remarriage of a widow or a widower who voluntarily married after maturity."
>
> In my opinion, a reform of this kind in the Hindu Law will be disastrous and to a large extent affect the moral standard of the society as a whole. For instance if a man or a woman married after maturity and unfortunately happens to lose either his wife or her husband after some days of married life, do you mean to say that the man or the woman should not be allowed to remarry even though a great desire of enjoying married life is left unfulfilled, for the only reason that the man or the woman concerned married after maturity? If a reform of this kind is made in the Hindu Law, I am afraid the man or the woman will find out some immoral way of gratifying his or her unsatisfied desire and there will be a wholesale moral corruption in the society. I therefore think that this question should entirely be left to the discretion of the man or woman concerned.

My reply to the catechist was a challenge to man who is the law-giver. He will not allow his liberty to be restricted. My reply, therefore, is an attempt to show that what is considered desirable for man should be equally so for women and that, therefore, a widow should have the same discretion as a widower about remarriage. Moreover, the Hindu Law is not inelastic like the laws made under the British Constitution. It will be noticed that I have deliberately used the word 'sinful' instead of criminal. A crime carries with it punishment imposed by a man-worked State. A sin is punishable only by God or one's conscience. And I do think that, if Hindu society would rise to the level I have aimed at in my answer, it will be a great gain for it and humanity.

WHAT IS KHADDAR?

A friend enquires whether the following definition of a 'Congressman' given in *The Leader* is a correct definition:

> Those who do not use 'pure' khaddar, i.e., khaddar woven by themselves out of yarn spun by themselves, have no right to call themselves Congressmen and should not be treated as such.

[1] *Vide* Vol. XXXI.

The correct definition is given in the body of the Congress resolutions. But for the sake of those who have no time to refer to the Congress resolutions, I may state that it has never been contemplated that the cloth to be used by Congressmen has to be woven by themselves. As a matter of fact, neither has the khaddar yarn to be spun by the members. The spinning test is totally apart from the wearing of khaddar, and it is purely voluntary. Whereas the wearing of khaddar is compulsory, the only thing needful is that the khaddar should be hand-spun and hand-woven—it does not matter by whom spun and woven. The yarn spun by the member need not form any part of the khaddar he wears. It is surprising to me that at this time of the day it is necessary to explain the meaning of khaddar. The appropriate question, however, would be how many Congressmen are wearing such pure khaddar as it is defined in the Congress resolution and not as in the quotation.

THE NECESSITY OF TESTING YARN

I have often laid stress upon the necessity of testing all the yarn that is spun either by volunteers or paid spinners. It does not mean that the yarn should be tested every day. But a periodical test is necessary if we are to improve the strength and evenness. These pages have also shown how a testing plant can be improvised without any difficulty. I hope that khadi centres will introduce this much-needed reform.

Young India, 18-11-1926

52. *LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT*

THE ASHRAM,
Thursday, November 18, 1926

CHI. VASUMATI,

I have your letter. You may come to Wardha. You have not given me the news that I had specially asked for about your health. Ramdas left today after staying for two days. Haribhai[1] has come today. He and Kusum[2] will go to Broach tomorrow.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9221

[1] Haribhai Desai of Broach; he had worked for some time as Gandhiji's secretary during the initial period of the Sabarmati Ashram.

[2] Wife of Haribhai Desai

53. LETTER TO REVASHANKER J. MEHTA

Kartika Sud 14 [November 18, 1926][1]

REVERED REVASHANKERBHAI,

I have your letter. It would certainly be very good if Jamnalal did do the work of the school.

Please let me know how much money can be invested in the [Ramachandran] lift. Do not have any qualms in regard to the matter. I have never wished to know anything about finances and therefore I may unknowingly make a bold demand. It is for you to check such a demand. If I know for certain that you will, then only will I not hesitate to make demands on suitable occasion.

Good that you have decided to go to Deolali. There is no harm if you send Dhiru[2] here provided he likes to come. It will be no burden to me. The weather is very good at present. It is not possible for me to go to Deolali and now there is no need either.

Regards from
MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1260

54. LETTER TO BAPUBHAI NARANJI VASHI

Kartika Sud 14, 1983, November 18, 1926

BHAISHRI BAPUBHAI,

I am giving in *Navajivan* the reply[3] to the last paragraph of your letter. I do not wish to give there the reply to the rest of your letter.

Every Hindu should have nothing but respect for Rishi Dayanand's[4] life. *Satyartha Prakash* is disappointing but it is better not to search and find out why it is so. We should exalt the virtues of great men. We may take note of their imperfections, if any, but a devotee should not probe into their causes.

[1] Reference to addressee's Deolali trip indicates that the letter was written in 1926; *vide* "Letter to Revashanker J. Mehta", 25-11-1926.

[2] Addressee's son

[3] Not traceable

[4] Dayanand Saraswati, author of *Satyartha Prakash* and founder of the Arya Samaj

I have deliberately decided not to give extracts from *Satyartha Prakash*. The person for whose sake I wished to give the extracts has already called on me. I showed him the extracts. If, further, I were to give the extracts [in *Navajivan*], this great man would be maligned, and his virtues lost sight of and a controversy might start; hence I decided not to give them.

I find the use of the word 'Arya' artificial. Whatever may be the origin of the word 'Hindu', it carries naturally that meaning which is forced into any other word.

By birth we all are low. It is only when we acquire virtuous qualities that we become *dwijas*[1]; this is the purport of one verse. Others emphasize the importance of birth. Each view is valuable from its respective point of view. We take birth according to the *sanskaras* of our previous births. New *sanskaras* modify them to some extent. There is humility and conservation of strength in allowing ourselves to be known as we are born.

What we call *prarabdha* is nothing but the fruit of deeds in our previous births. Human efforts mean our attempts to make desirable changes therein. Sometimes one acts in opposition to the other, while at other times they run together harmoniously. Hence it cannot be said that one is always stronger than the other. We cannot disregard *prarabdha*; we cannot give up human effort. This explains the importance attributed to effort free from attachment.

Vandemataram from
MOHANDAS

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: S.N. 19965

55. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

Kartika Sud 14, 1983 [November 18, 1926]

BHAI GHANSHYAMDAS,

I have your letter. Regarding Geneva I have given my opinion a few days ago at your Kashi address.

It appears from Deviprasadji's letter that you are bound by promise. If such is the case the question of going or not going does not arise. As it is, you ought to go.

Yours,
MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Hindi: C.W. 6138. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

[1] Twice-born

56. LETTER TO PARAMESHWARA DIAL GUPTA

November 19, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

I do not propose specifically to deal with your questions in *Young India*. I have in the past dealt with such difficulties and may do so incidentally in the series I am writing.

I do not regard Rama and Krishna as historical characters as depicted in the books. Ravana represents passions, as Kauravas represent the evil in us. The burden of the *Ramayana* and the *Mahabharata* is to teach ahimsa.

I do not accept everything related in the *Mahabharata* as gospel.

If you will reread my writings on ahimsa, you will not find any contradiction between the passages quoted by you.

If a man cannot defend his country by non-violent means, he will be justified in using violent means rather than surrender in a cowardly manner.

I do say that truth must be told at any cost. But one is not always bound to disclose facts.

Yours sincerely,

PARAMESHWARA DIAL GUPTA
CHRIST CHURCH COLLEGE
CAWNPORE

From a photostat: S.N. 19740

57. LETTER TO SATYANAND SARASVATI

SABARMATI,
November 19, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. I believe Rajendra Babu to be incapable of doing anything mean. But if you give me permission to send your letter to Rajendra Babu, I would secure his explanation.

I do not repent of my estimate of Mussalmans.

Yours sincerely,

SWAMI SATYANAND SARASVATI
C/o B. N. SINHA
SAMASTIPUR
B.N.W. RY.

From a photostat: S.N. 19742

58. LETTER TO DEVCHAND PAREKH

[*November 19, 1926*][1]

BHAISHRI DEVCHAND,

I have your letter. We should not put Dr. Pranjivan to inconvenience[2]. But we can have Revashankerbhai[3]. Would you like Nanabhai Narsinhprasad? Do you want Jamnalalji? We have the big problem of English, otherwise we could have Rajagopalachari. Would you like to have Kripalani? But I should suggest that you choose a real lover of khadi. I think we should look at the work of a man rather than his name. I have received your wire. The 30th will suit me.[4]

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5705

[1] From the postmark
[2] By offering him the presidentship of the Kathiawar Political Conference
[3] Revashanker Zaveri, brother of Dr. Pranjivandas Mehta
[4] For holding the meeting of the Executive Committee of the Kathiawar Political Conference

59. LETTER TO BEHRAMJI KHAMBHATTA

Friday [November 19, 1926][1]

BHAISHRI BEHRAMJI,

I have your letter. You may come whenever you can. I will start from here on the 2nd December. It is not certain when I shall return to the Ashram. I had come to know from Devdas that you were in danger of getting leucoderma. Even if you get it, what does it matter? There is no need to worry or be perturbed about it. I assure that you have enough spiritual understanding to be able to live cheerfully even if you have leucoderma. We can talk about this if you come earlier.

Mrs. Eddy's book is ordinary. It contains nothing new. Her language has a certain strangeness about it. That lady may have some ability but I found that she was misusing her knowledge. The cure for suffering lies in bearing it. Man should never use his spiritual strength to cure his suffering. If Jesus uses his spiritual power to cure the sick, that does not mean that all of us should start using our spiritual power to cure ourselves. If we adopt remedies to cure the body, which is perishable, they, too, should be physical.

Hence a sick person should pray to God thus:

"O God! this illness is the result of my sins committed knowingly or unknowingly. Deliver me from my sins and give me the strength to bear this suffering."

If a sick man thinks that he is not sick, it is a kind of delusion. He is a true man who knows that he is sick but remains unaffected by his suffering. A sick person should analyse himself and, realizing that his body and soul are distinct, understand their true relation and the meaning of *moksha*.

I strongly advise you to leave off Christian science. You may, if you wish, certainly try ordinary remedies for your ailment, or do nothing and have faith in God. That's the golden mean. Take simple treatment and develop the power of endurance.

If you have anything to say to me in this matter, please do. I have certainly not read Mrs. Eddy's book as carefully as you

[1] Mahadev Desai, writing to the addressee on November 21, and apparently referring to this letter, asked: "Have you received Bapu's letter regarding Christian science?" The letter, therefore, appears to have been written on the preceding Friday which was November 19.

are likely to have done. I have just glanced through it. If I have done her an injustice, it has been done unknowingly. But how can I hide from you the impression it has made on me?

And, therefore, the last point is that, whatever my views, you should weigh them and do what your conscience tells you. We ourselves bind or free us. Others merely advise and keep away.

Blessings to you both.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7534

60. LETTER TO HARJIVAN M. VYAS

Kartika Purnima 1983 [*November 19, 1926*]

BHAISHRI HARJIVAN,

I have your letter. My viewpoint is entirely different as regards both your questions.

Mill cloth may or may not contain any fat, but on account of the use of that cloth the fat of millions is being sucked and therefore its use should be given up.

If, while refining foreign sugar, bone dust is used, there is no reason to believe that it is not used in sugar made in our country. But it is good if we make the least use of sugar and such other things.

If we examine minutely how everything is made we shall surely find some sort of defect. So a thoughtful person will make do with the fewest things, and will give up using foreign goods even of good quality when local substitutes are available.

Vandemataram from
MOHANDAS GANDHI

BRAHMACHARI HARJIVAN MANISHANKER
VYAS
ZAMKA, P.O. BAGASRA, BHAYANI
KATHIAWAR

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: S.N. 19967

61. LETTER TO SATISH CHANDRA MUKHERJEE

November 20, 1926

DEAR SATISH BABU,

I was delighted to have your long letter. But I was sorry to learn that you had malaria and that Krishnadas had unhappy experiences. You must please take care of yourself and have Krishnadas by your side. I hope you will continue to let me hear from you both about yourself and Krishnadas.

I am thankful for your profitable criticism. I shall deal with some of the points in the series I am writing. Greatest good of the greatest number is a doctrine which I think cannot be defended on the ground of ahimsa. Ahimsa insists on the greatest good of all. My defence of the destruction of the dogs is no doubt partly utilitarian and a concession to and an admission of our weakness. But destruction of suffering animals is defended on the highest ground of religion.

Yours sincerely,

SATISH CHANDRA MUKHERJEE
C/o S. C. GUHA
DARBHANGA

From a microfilm: S.N. 19743

62. LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

Kartika Vad 1 [November 20, 1926][1]

CHI. JAMNALAL,

I have your letter. May you live long and may your purity grow. No one in this world is free from imperfection. We can only strive to get rid of it. You are making an effort in that direction. A person who makes an honest effort knows no fall. This is the divine pledge.

We shall now meet on the 4th. I intend to go *via* Tapti Valley [Railway]. Shastriar arrives tomorrow.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2878

[1] The postmark bears the date, "23-11-1926", Wardha, where the addressee received it.

63. *IS THIS HUMANITY?-VII*

[*November 21, 1926*]

Some of my correspondents do not seem to realize the fundamental consideration underlying my suggestion for the destruction of dogs under certain circumstances. Thus, for instance, I have not made the suggestion in a purely utilitarian spirit. The utility to society incidentally accrues from the act, but the principal consideration is the relief of the long drawn-out agony of the creatures whose present condition it is simply impossible for me to tolerate. In the articles in this series, there has not been even the remotest suggestion that man has the right of disposal over the lower animals and that he may, therefore, kill them for his own comfort or pleasure. One of the writers betrays a strange confusion of thought when he says that the characteristic of an exalted soul is that he remains unaffected by the misery around him. He is callous, rather than exalted, who has not learnt to melt at others' woe, who has not learnt to see himself in others and others in himself. Intense longing for the happiness of others was the mother of the discovery of ahimsa. And the sage who was the embodiment of compassion found his soul's delight in renouncing his own physical comfort and stopped killing for his pleasure the dumb creation about him.

A correspondent reminds me of the advice given me by Shri Rajchandra when I approached him with a doubt as to what I should do if a serpent threatened to bite me.[1] Certainly his advice was that, rather than kill the serpent, I should allow myself to be killed by it. But the correspondent forgets that it is not myself that is the subject-matter of the present discussion, but the welfare of society in general as also of the suffering animals. If I had approached Raychandbhai with the question whether I should or should not kill a serpent writhing in agony, and whose pain I could not relieve otherwise, or whether I should or should not kill a serpent threatening to bite a child under my protection, if I could not otherwise turn the reptile away, I do not know what answer he would have given. For me the answer is clear as daylight and I have given it.

A studious correspondent confronts me with some verses from

[1] *Vide* Vol. I, p. 91.

a Jain philosopher and asks if I agree with the position taken up in them. One of the verses says:

> One should not kill even beasts of prey in the belief that by killing one such, one saves the lives of many.

Another says:

> Nor should one kill them out of a compassionate feeling that if they were suffered to live longer they might sink deeper into sin.

The third verse says:

> Nor should one kill distressed creatures presuming that one would thereby shorten the length of their agony.

To me the meaning of the verses is clear. And it is this that a particular theory should not be the spring of action in any case. You may commit *himsa*, not in order that you thereby realize in practice a pet theory of yours, but because you are driven to it as an imperative duty. Work which spontaneously comes to one's lot, or action without attachment, in the words of the *Gita*, is the duty of a seeker after *moksha*. Confine your energy to work that comes your way, I conceive the Jain philosopher to say, never seek fresh fields of activity. The verses, to me, define the mental attitude of detachment that should govern one's action in cases where *himsa* seems to be imperative and unavoidable.

But I have arrived at my present views independently of any authority, though originally they may have been drawn from various sources, and I submit that they are in perfect consonance with ahimsa, even though they may be proved to be contrary to the teaching of the philosopher.

Young India, 25-11-1926

64. *KHADI FROM YAJNA YARN*

A member of the All-India Spinners' Association writes as follows:

> Khadi is woven from the yarn received from the members and then it is sold. How are the proceeds utilized? Would it be wrong if this khadi was supplied to the poor at a cheaper rate, charging only the weaving expenses, etc.? What advantage do you find in the present system? I wish you to clarify this matter through *Navajivan*.

I think that this question has already been answered once. The *yajna* yarn is received in a very limited quantity—and though its quality is improving day by day and so irregularly that it can

just cover the expenses of collecting and storing. Hence the khadi made from this yarn is sold at ordinary rates. Sufficient khadi to meet the demands of poor people is produced neither from *yajna* yarn nor from any other yarn. But the *yajna* yarn amply feeds the poor. The khadi that is produced out of the yarn spun by the poor costs more per yard than mill-made cloth. Yet the middle and the rich classes are trying to ensure the success of the art of spinning by purchasing it. When this *yajna* which is now being performed on a small scale becomes widespread, khadi will be given almost free to the poor, while the rich and the middle classes will wear khadi available at low price. At present the yarn received by the Spinners' Association satisfies the sentiment which when developed will fulfil the material need. If the Spinners' Association has no members and if [for membership] there is no condition of good spinning, then there would be no one carrying on khadi work as at present. Thus even though the poor are not enabled to wear khadi made of yarn received by the Spinners' Association, yet they derive all the benefits of its activities. The very existence of the Spinners' Association is for the benefit of the poor.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 21-11-1926

65. *NOTES*

Late Shri Lallubhai Asharam

Who will not feel grieved at the death of Sir Lallubhai Asharam? He was the glory of Gujarat. All are praising him with one voice for his sense of justice. I had very little personal acquaintance with him; but I hear praises of his character from every quarter. Sir Lallubhai possessed the rare combination of knowledge, wealth and character. Every Gujarati, every Indian can be proud of him and emulate his good qualities. May God grant strength and courage to the members of Sir Lallubhai's family to bear this great calamity.

Khadi-hawking in Kathiawar

I have written earlier that the Khadi Institution at Amreli has produced khadi in large quantities. My view is that this khadi should be consumed in Kathiawar itself. It is our misfortune that khadi has to be hawked. If khadi is consumed locally then the energy spent by the hawkers in selling it can be utilized for increasing production. The production is not done for fun, but for

the sake of giving work to unemployed women. Those Kathiawaris who realize this should make full use of the khadi produced in Kathiawar. This is a service to India and this is real economics. It would be doing service to the whole world if all of us would shoulder our individual responsibilities. Society is crushed because its members have to carry others' burdens. If a few rich would cease riding on the shoulders of the poor, then the burden on the poor would be lightened. But the world will always have the rich and the poor. And so there arises the duty of doing service to the poor. We may not have the strength to live like the poor, but all of us can.

This explains why it is essential for us to spin. If we wear the khadi which is spun and woven by the poor, it would be a service to them to that extent.

We should begin this service with our next door neighbours. So the khadi produced in Kathiawar must be purchased, in the first instance, by Kathiawaris themselves.

This khadi may be found expensive, coarse, or not durable. But I hold that it ought to be purchased in spite of these defects. The *chapatis* made by a mother though thick, ill-shaped and expensive are preferable to the beautiful round and cheap *chapatis* of Delhi.

Following this line of thinking, Abbas Saheb will again start khadi-hawking in Kathiawar. Starting on the 19th, the programme is as follows:

Gondal	19, 20
Dhoraji	22, 23, 24
Ranavav	26, 27
Manavadar, Batwa	1, 2, 3, 4
Mangrol	4, 5, 6
Junagadh	10, 11
Jetpur	20, 21, 22
Upleta	24, 25
Porbandar	28, 29, 30
Verawal	7, 8, 9
Jamnagar	12, 13, 14

It is my earnest hope that at all these places the people will welcome him and his co-workers and help them in selling off the khadi.

I should like to say that much better khadi is produced at present than that sold four years ago; it is thinner, more durable and cheaper. With the passage of time and with due encourage-

ment, it will be still better and cheaper. It is in our hands to bring this about.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 21-11-1926

66. LETTER TO C. F. ANDREWS

November 22, [1926][1]

MY DEAR CHARLIE,

I have just got your cable about prayer day[2]. I am forwarding it to Sarojini and writing a strong backing leader in *Young India*.[3] The whole Ashram will join you that day in your prayers. I hope to be that day in Wardha. I shall be with you in spirit that day though the body will be there with Vinoba and Jamnalalji.

Shastri[4] was here yesterday. We had a long and quiet chat.

Please remember there can be no response from our side to any scheme of repatriation, voluntary or otherwise. We are bound to look after all returned immigrants. But that can be no part of any scheme. Any such agreement will immediately make repatriation compulsory in substance though not in law.

I hope you are getting *Young India* regularly. I do deal with S.A. matters almost in every issue. The coming number will deal with Colonial-born Indians. It is an appeal to them not to ask for any differential treatment.

Hope you are keeping good health.

The elections here have saturated the atmosphere with poison.

With love,

Yours,
MOHAN

From a photostat: G.N. 967

[1] The original did not bear the 'year'. This is inferred from the reference to the article about Colonial-born Indians published under "Notes", 25-11-1926.

[2] To be observed on December 19, the Sunday following the arrival of the Government of India delegation in South Africa for the Round Table Conference. *Charles Freer Andrews*, p. 222, has: The proposal was welcomed everywhere; in India, Gandhi and Dr. Westcott the Metropolitan commended it to their people; in South Africa, under the leadership of the Deans of Cape Town and Johannesburg English Christians joined with Indians in prayer, and Dr. da Plessis of Stellenboch issued a similar call to the Afrikaander people.

[3] *Vide* "A Day of Prayer", 25-11-1926.

[4] V. S. Srinivasa Sastri

67. *LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA*

November 22, 1926

DEAR SATIS BABU,

I have your two letters. No one who reads your letter about Capt. Petaval can accuse you of want of humour. For conciseness and biting sarcasm, the letter is not to be improved upon.

Your letter about Prafulla Babu makes me intensely grieved. I wish you had given me the cause for this sudden change. What is he now going to do? It does mean much to me that a man of Kshitish Babu's silent enthusiasm can be closely drawn to me, i.e., the movement.

You must not lose your equanimity on any account whatsoever. Read over and over again that part of "Ayodhya Kand" which deals with the banishment of Rama. It is enough to make anyone rejoice in suffering. What though even the whole world should desert so long as your own faith does not desert you? Khadi if it has truth in it and true representatives will survive many more shocks. You must come to Wardha early and pass a few quiet days there.

Of course you will tell me to write to Prafulla Babu, if you think it necessary.

Here is a letter from Abhoy Ashram for publication. Please tell me what to do with it. I am telling Suresh Babu that I am sending it to you before publishing it.

Hemprabha Devi's letter is sweet.

With love,

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 1564

68. LETTER TO HEMPRABHA DAS GUPTA

Monday [November 22, 1926][1]

DEAR SISTER,

I am very happy to have your letter. You must always write to me.

I do not know the reason why Prafulla Babu left. Such things will keep on happening in the world. You are right in saying that in suffering the soul blossoms. This is the teaching of all religions.

I am relieved to know that all of you are now keeping good health.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1615

69. LETTER TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

November 22, 1926

MY DEAR C.R.,

I have your letter. I knew when I wrote the article[2] on hand-weaving *v.* hand-spinning", that those whom I had in view would be little touched by it. But I could see that there were many who thought like them. They might understand the position. If I ever see the Viceroy, I do not expect to fare better with him. Two pice per day sticks in the throat. Acceptance of the wheel means a revolution in one's outlook.

Well, you have Chhotelal there. I hope you will succeed in making him positively gay. I should even countenance his marriage, if I could make him shake off his moodiness. I will propose a vote of thanks to you at the next meeting of our newly-formed board, if you can renew him and make him think of others besides himself.

Sastri passed a pleasant afternoon with us yesterday. He

[1] It appears this letter was written on the same day as the one to Satis Chandra Das Gupta, *vide* the preceding item.

[2] *Vide* "Handloom *v.* Spinning-wheel", 11-11-1926.

asked to be shown the Ashram and he looked at everything with interest.

Pethick-Lawrence tells me he had a nice time with you.

With love

Yours,
BAPU

[PS.]

What about Wardha?

From a photostat: S.N. 19744

70. LETTER TO RAVISHANKER G. ANJARIA

Kartika Vad 5 [November 23, 1926][1]

BHAISHRI RAVISHANKER ANJARIA,

I have looked over your questions. Blind faith surely destroys the soul. Moreover, this is not a subject which requires you to believe in someone. It is therefore proper that everyone should decide for himself with the help of his own discretion.

You will not find in my article anything to the effect that all stray dogs are in a miserable plight.

Nor have I stated anywhere that all dogs might bite or catch rabies.

Nor have I suggested at any place destruction of the canine race.

I would never suggest violence for the sake of utility. In my opinion, where there is no dharma there is no utility.

But those who needs must destroy dogs can easily busy themselves with checking cow-slaughter like others who try to put an end to cow-slaughter though they think nothing of destroying vegetation. Whether the killing of a dog is unavoidable is to be decided on the merits of each individual case. Do not the Hindus who kill goats abjure cow-slaughter?

A man who looks to his own happiness and continually commits violence in quest of it knows not his dharma.

Have no fear that my articles would shake non-violence off its foundations.

Why should we not regard the deliberate breeding of dogs as unnecessary as we do that of mosquitoes and the like?

[1] The reference to the two articles about killing rabid dogs which had appeared in *Navajivan*, 10-10-1926 and 17-10-1926, suggests that the letter was written in 1926.

I do not endeavour to preach violence; I only intend to deprecate false non-violence. In fact, we have been committing grave violence in the name of non-violence. And I find that in these circumstances we cannot readily understand true non-violence.

I have no doubt that my view is based on true non-violence. I can, therefore, wait in patience. Do not be uneasy as I am not likely to ask you or anyone else to kill a dog or any other creature.

Vandemataram from
MOHANDAS

DOCTOR SAHEB RAVISHANKER GANESHJI ANJARIA
MANGROL
KATHIAWAR

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: S.N. 19968

71. *LETTER TO JANAKDHARI PRASAD*

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
November 24, 1926

DEAR JANAKDHARI BABU,

I have your letter. I was grieved to hear of your fever and happy to learn at the same time that you have pulled through.

I do not feel inclined to make time for reading the literature about the 'Coming of the World Teacher', because it would not carry conviction to me. If a great teacher comes down to the earth, he would leave his mark whether we recognize him or not. So long as we believe in and worship God with all our heart, we are on the safe ground. He will make our way clear to whatever we should do.

Yours sincerely,

JANAKDHARI PRASAD
GANDHI VIDYALAYA
HAJIPUR

From a microfilm: S.N. 19746